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THE PHILOSOPHY OF GOETHE'S FAUST

BY

THOMAS DAVIDSON

Author of "The Philosophical System of Antonio Rosmini Serbati," "The Parthenon Frieze and Other Essays," "Prolegomena to Tennyson's 'In Memoriam,'" "Aristotle and Ancient Educational Ideals," "The Education of the Greek People and its Influence on Civilization," "Rousseau and Education according to Nature," "A History of Education," "The Education of the Wage-Earners," etc.

EDITED BY

CHARLES M. BAKEWELL

GINN & COMPANY

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PREFACE

Throughout his life Mr. Davidson was an assiduous reader of Goethe's writings, and particularly of the *Faust*, most of which he knew by heart. In the six lectures that form this book, first delivered in the winter of 1896 at Cambridge, Massachusetts, he has told what that poem had come to mean for him, and has sought to lay bare its "philosophical or ethical skeleton."

These lectures are published partly in response to the request of those who heard them delivered and have expressed the desire to have them in permanent form, and partly in the belief that they will be welcome to a much larger circle of readers. Those who read poetry for its content cannot fail to be interested in the interpretation of Goethe's masterpiece by a scholar of Mr. Davidson's breadth and learning who had lived long and intimately with it.

"I hold," writes Mr. Davidson, "that true poetry may include all the content of philosophy and much of that of religion, — presenting it, however, in its own form, which is always individual and concrete. *Faust* is just such a form; but its content, I believe, is the entire spiritual movement toward individual emancipation, composed of the Teutonic Reformation and the Italian Renaissance in all their history, scope, and consequences."

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These lectures were written for delivery, and were not prepared by their author with special view to publication. Under these circumstances they may very well contain some passages which he would himself have emended had he lived to see them put in print. Nevertheless, the editor has thought it best to leave the text in the form which Mr. Davidson gave it, and has only ventured to make the obvious minor corrections in proof.

The editor has also supplied the missing chapter headings, and has added translations of the passages which in the manuscript were given in German, wherever the meaning is not apparent from the context. In almost all such cases the translations are taken from Miss Swanwick's version, and the translations so taken are inclosed in brackets.

THE EDITOR.

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THE PHILOSOPHY OF GOETHE'S FAUST

I

THE FAUST MOTIVE

It is a weighty saying of Aristotle's that "Poetry is more serious and more philosophical than History." This was certainly true of the classical poetry of Greece, to which he specially refers, and it is true of all poetry which has any claim to be considered classical. History is the ordered record of facts. Poetry is the embodiment of the inner meaning of these facts in concrete form. In the language of a recent book, it is "Reality," as opposed to "Appearance." That this was Goethe's opinion is shown in the first prologue to the work with which we are about to deal. There the poet, protesting against the prostitution of his art to popular taste or sordid ends, exclaims: "Shall the poet, for thy sake, blasphemously fritter away the loftiest right, the human right, that Nature hath conferred upon him? Whereby doth he move all hearts? Whereby doth he vanquish every element? Is it not the harmony which penetrates forth from his bosom and draws the world back into his heart? When Nature, unconcernedly spinning, forces the thread's

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everlasting length upon the spindle; when the inharmonious crowd of all beings sounds tiresomely in confusion; who is it that, with infusion of life, breaks up the eternal monotonous flow of the series, so that it stirs rhythmically? Who calls the individual to the consecration of the universal, wherein it beats in glorious chords? . . . Who guarantees Olympus, assembles gods? It is the power of man *revealed* in the poet."

Poetry, then, according to Goethe, is the humanization of the world, the infusion into it of the human spirit, whereby alone it gains meaning for man.[1] No wonder that Aristotle should say that poetry is more serious and philosophical than history, since the latter presents the world as yet unhumanized.

I have made these remarks and citations because there is at the present day a current notion, more or less consciously formulated, that poetry, and indeed art generally, is a mere play of the creative imagination, charming indeed, and perhaps uplifting, but without any serious content, and therefore without any relation to the serious, practical affairs of life. It is sadly true, indeed, that most of our current literature and art corresponds to this notion; but the same is not true of the great literature, the literature that forms part of the eternal possession of the race. It is not true of the *Book of Job*, of the *Oresteia*, of the *Divine Comedy*, of *Faust*, of *Julius Cæsar*, of *In Memoriam*, and surely it is not true of the greatest of all poems, the gospel, that "truth embodied in a tale," as Tennyson calls it. Some people

[1] We see here the influence of Kant's philosophy, though the thought occurs in Dante, *Parad.*, IV, 40 sqq.

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seem to feel that the gospel would be of no account, if it should be accepted as poetry and not as history. To such it might be well to recommend Aristotle's dictum. It is just because the gospel is poetry that it is true, and that it has had any effect upon the world. As a recent German theologian says, "The image of Christ, as presented in the synoptic Gospels, is the noblest blossom of religious poetry." [1]

I think we may assume, then, that *Faust* has a serious content, that it presents some phase of that inner power of man "which presses from the bosom and draws the world back into the heart." Nor can we be in the least doubt as to what that content is. It is plainly and obviously that emancipation of the individual from institutionalism which has been the human power in history since the days of Faust, that is, since the rise of the Germanic Reformation and the Italian Renaissance.

Man, as we find him in the savage state, is a slave to everything, — to nature, to imagined unseen powers, to passion, to social relations, — and as Hegel said, "Human history is a progress in the consciousness of Freedom."

That form of slavery from which man has most slowly emancipated himself is, perhaps, slavery to institutions. Twice in the history of the ancient world an attempt was made to break the chain, first by Socrates, and then by Jesus; but the one was poisoned and the other crucified, so deep was the hatred then existing to freedom. Jesus' simple teaching would have set men free: but when it had passed through the hands of the Jews, and been freighted with all the narrow prejudices and dreams of

[1] Brandt, *Die Evang. Gesch. una der Ursprung des Christ*, p. 577.

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Judaism; when it had passed through those of the Greeks and been fettered with the rigid dogmas of Greek intellectualism; and when it had passed into those of the Romans and been organized into their system of imperial legalism — then it became the organ of a slavery more oppressive than anything that the world had ever known. In the Middle Age man lived his life and hoped for eternal salvation simply as a member of two institutions — State and Church. The science of the former was jurisprudence, subserved by medicine; that of the latter, theology, subserved by philosophy. Thus the sciences which constituted the four faculties of the mediæval universities were the mere instruments of the all-enslaving organism.

This organism, which grew up out of, and which admirably suited, the Roman Empire was superinduced from without upon the Germanic nations, at that time under the sway of Rome. On its ecclesiastical side it was introduced by monks, and monachism, being originally the protest of spiritual and mystical Christianity against the secularization of the Church, was always very far from favorable to the compound organization as a whole. No wonder, then, that in the monkish Christianity of the Germanic nations there was always an element of rebellion against the all-pervading slavery. And this element was strongly reënforced by one of the fundamental characteristics of the Germanic peoples, — the love of individual freedom, the sense of self-dependence. This may be called the Germanic element in history, and it had a bitter fight with the Latin institutionalism. The history of the Middle Age is largely a record of this

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struggle. But thanks to the prestige and superstitious reverence with which Rome was able to surround herself; thanks also, in part, to the wise diplomacy of Pius III in taking the growing individualism of the Germans as represented by the Frankish (the name is significant!) Charles under the shield of the Church, the Latin spirit was long able to maintain the supremacy. At last, after many abortive attempts, the change came, and the long-suppressed Germanic spirit in large measure broke the chains which bound it, asserting itself in its true character. *Faust* is the drama of this movement: of the escape of the German from the controlling influences of Judæa, Greece, and Rome, — of the assertion by the Germanic spirit that these shall henceforth serve it, and not rule it.

This movement has two fairly well-defined sides, one Teutonic, the other Italian; but both essentially Germanic, for the individualistic element in Italy is all Germanic. The Teutonic side seeks freedom in Church matters, the matters with which theology and philosophy deal; the Italian, freedom in State matters, the matters with which medicine (i.e. physics) and jurisprudence deal. In a word, the Teuton seeks intellectual, the Italian moral, freedom. The former we call the Protestant Reformation, the excess of which is rationalism; the latter we call the Italian Renaissance, the excess of which is materialism and moral anarchy.

Inasmuch, then, as the Germanic movement includes these two sides, they are both taken account of by Goethe in his poem. *Faust* is the embodiment of the tendency as a whole.

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The poem opens with a dedication which we may pass over. Then comes a "prologue on the stage," in which the poet, after presenting the three aspects under which literature may be regarded, — that of a means to wealth (the theater director), that of a means to fame or applause (the actor), that of a gospel to all future time (the poet), — plainly claims the last as his own. This prologue is purely prefatory. The play proper begins with the prologue in heaven, which does for it what the corner figures in Greek pediment groups do for them; that is, marks the scene in which the action takes place, in this case the sort of world in which the drama is laid. This prologue is borrowed, as to form and function, from the *Book of Job*; but it differs from the prologue to that work in two important respects: Mephistopheles, the spirit of evil, takes the place of the Satan who is merely the sifting, critical spirit among the "Sons of God"; Faust, the victim, is to be tempted to evil by being sated with all the good things of this life, not by being deprived of them, as Job was.

And what is the sort of world in which this drama, the drama of human emancipation, takes place? We get two different views of it, — that of the archangels and that of Mephistopheles; and these personages are distinguished solely by these views, the one universal, the other partial. The Lord is the spirit of universality; Mephistopheles, as he tells us, the spirit of partiality, or at least, one of many such spirits.

The scene opens with a view of the universe, with the Lord and his archangels gradually approaching the earth. The archangels are celebrating the Lord and his works.

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From their point of view, with their range of vision, the whole is one sublime harmony, without one false note, and though far beyond even their power to fathom, the works are glorious as on the first day. To be sure, as they approach the earth they descry opposition (Ἔρις), and later even conflict, destruction, and devastation; but in spite of all that they sing in chorus:

> The vision gives the angels strength,
> While no one may fathom Thee!
> And all Thy lofty works
> Are glorious as on the first day.

The universal, archangelic view of the world is, of course, the true one in Goethe's view. It is absolute, fundamental, eternal optimism. It is expressed in verses that roll along with the harmony of the spheres. Contrasted with this is the view of Mephistopheles, who appears when the heavenly hosts reach the earth. His view is absolute pessimism, due to the limitation of his vision, and is expressed in verses which it would be a compliment to call prosaic. He, of course, knows nothing about spheres and their harmony; he has no pathos, having no ideal to set off against the real; he sees only man and his small affairs, and he finds him as "queer as on the first day" (parodying the words of the archangels). The trouble is, man has a semblance of heaven's light, which he calls reason, and uses only to be more beastly than every other beast. He is like a long-legged grasshopper, always trying to rise above the earth, and always failing. To the Lord's question whether Mephistopheles finds nothing right on the earth, he replies bluntly, "No,

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Lord; everything is now, as always, heartily bad." The trouble, of course, is that man will keep rising, through pain and struggle, to universality, which is what Mephistopheles hates above everything, what he cannot in any way understand. The Lord now asks him if he knows Faust, and it is interesting to see how the same person looks from the two points of view. To the Lord he is Faust, that is, simply a human being and "my servant"; to Mephistopheles he is "the doctor," that is, a sum of unrealities, as we shall presently see. To the Lord's assertion that Faust is his servant Mephistopheles replies with a sneer, and then gives a description of him, meant to be very sarcastic, but in reality merely describing a man devoted to the ideal, the universal, though as yet in a blind, impetuous way. The Lord admits that Faust serves him in a confused way, but says that he will soon bring him to clearness. The irreverent Mephistopheles, little thinking that he is the means chosen for this end, at once offers to bet that the Lord will lose him yet, if he will only permit him (Mephistopheles) to lead him gently in his way. The permission is accorded, the Lord adding that "man errs as long as he aspires." "Draw this spirit," he says, "down from its primal fount, and lead him, if thou canst catch him, down on thy way. And stand ashamed if thou art compelled to confess, 'A good man in his dark impulse is still conscious of the right way.'" Mephistopheles promises to triumph gloriously if he succeed, and the Lord says he shall have that privilege with that proviso, and adds words in which the whole moral theory of Goethe's world is wrapt up: "I have never hated spirits like you. Of all spirits

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of negation the scoffer is least burdensome to me. Man's activity is all too ready to relax. He soon loves unconditioned rest. Therefore I like to grant him the companion that stirs and causes and must, as devil, be doing." Then, turning to the archangels, he says: "But ye, true sons of gods, rejoice in beauty with its living wealth. The becoming, which eternally effects and lives, embrace you with love's gracious bounds, and what hovers in restless appearance, make ye firm with enduring thoughts."

What does all this mean? Simply this, that the divine purpose is not crossed or arrested, but rather furthered, by negation, without which man would rust and rot in stagnation and sloth. In a word, disintegration is but another name for differentiation, which is the prime condition of all evolution. Man, if he is to evolve, therefore, requires as a companion a disintegrating force, which, taken by itself, indeed, is pure evil, but which, when counteracted by the integrating forces of universality, is the spring of progress. These forces of universality are represented by the sons of God, who are bidden to find their joy, not in disintegration but in integration, which is the source of the living wealth of beauty. The force of integration is love, which sets limits and distinctions in the ever working, living process of becoming, and thus gives rise to individual things.[1] The forces of integration lay hold, as it were, of the phenomena that exist only in change, and by imposing upon them the laws of intelligence, with its enduring

[1] It is needless to say that this is the old Aryan view, found alike in the Rig-Veda and in the works of Hesiod.

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thoughts, give them that permanency which produces a rational world.[1]

According to Goethe, then, the world is a continual process of disintegration, represented by Mephistopheles, and of redintegration into ever higher wholes by the power of love which is centered upon God.

When the Lord has finished speaking the heaven closes, the archangels go about their separate duties, and Mephistopheles is left alone on the earth. He cynically remarks: "I like to see the old fellow from time to time, and take care not to break with him. It is really pretty of a great Lord to speak so humanly with the devil himself." Poor Mephistopheles! he does not know how completely he is serving the Lord.

So ends the prologue. Before the next scene several years evidently elapse, during which Mephistopheles has been busy at his quiet work of disintegration. When the scene opens we find that Faust's intellectual and moral world has already completely gone to pieces, — that mediæval institutional world through which he had

[1] Here we find that wonderful unity of Aristotelian and Kantian thought that characterizes Goethe's later writings. Expressed in Aristotle's forms it runs thus: Matter is pure becoming (γένεσις), having by itself no being. It receives being (οὐσία) only when it is subjected to the forms (εἴδη) of intelligence (νοῦς), which have their origin in the supreme intelligence (νοῦς), to which the world stands related by love (ὁ νοῦς κινεῖ ὡς ἐρώμενος). In Kantian terms it would run thus: Out of the changeful matter of sense (and change implies space and time!) the understanding, with its fixed forms or categories, creates the world. Goethe himself, following Aristotle rather than Kant, says: "Reason has for its object the becoming; understanding, the become." Nothing could be better or truer. Reason creates the world that understanding grasps, arranges, and unifies.

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sought to live and find salvation, and which he had sought thoroughly to comprehend by becoming a doctor in all the four faculties of his university. He has been a professor apparently in all of these faculties for ten years, and well might Mephistopheles call him "the Doctor." Faust, who thus completely represents the culture of the Middle Age in every one of its aspects, has now, however, discovered the utter vanity of all his acquisitions, in fact has reached Mephistopheles' opinion of them, as well as of the institutions of which they are the exponents. We find him at his desk at midnight, in his mediæval Gothic chamber, restless, despairing, not knowing which way to turn. Disgusted with his environment and bereft of social guidance, he turns to nature for instruction. His whole impulse is to get away from tradition and convention, which float above reality without touching it, and to come into close relation with nature, physical nature, which he conceives to be reality. With this view he turns to magic, which promises to enable him to do this, and which, indeed, the poet allows to fulfill its promise. Accordingly he calls up first one power of nature (the spirit of the universe) and then another (the *anima mundi*), only at last to discover that, being himself no part of the process of nature, and bearing no resemblance to its forces, he can find no satisfaction in it. Before he can recover from his astonishment and disappointment he receives a visit from his famulus, Wagner, a dry pedant, who represents the humanism (that is, the return to classic literature) of the sixteenth century. The hollowness of this is soon apparent, and one more possible avenue to satisfaction is cut off for Faust. When he is again left alone

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he returns to his despair. His environment is still the old lumber room and junk shop of the Middle Age, and he can see no way out of it. Neither nature nor history has anything to offer. But there is one possibility yet left. If he does not belong to the world of nature, then he must belong to the world of spirit, and perhaps all his suffering and sense of confinement come from his connection with that piece of nature, his body. Accordingly he resolves to get rid of that by means of a subtle poison, and his vivid imagination soon beholds a chariot of fire ready to carry him "to new spheres of pure activity" — a higher life full of divine ecstasy.

Thus far only his head and imagination have been called into play to find a way out of his difficulties; and all history and poetry, since the days of Job, have shown that these can never succeed in their quest. There is nothing more certain than that the intellect, by itself, or even aided by the imagination, has no solution for the problems of life. It lands always in *Nirvâna* or agnosticism. But now, in preparing to drink the poison, Faust takes out an old crystal cup which had belonged to his fathers, and out of which, in his glad youth, yet unwasted by the phthisis of thought, he had often drunk at merry-makings. This touches something in him besides his intellect; it touches his heart, his Gemüt, and makes him tender and sensitive, without, however, turning him aside from his purpose. The deadly cup is at his lips, when the Easter bells ring out the music to the glorious resurrection hymn.

Chriſt iſt erſtanden! That makes him hesitate, takes the cup from his lips. He listens like one spellbound.

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Christ has indeed arisen for and in him; that is, for the first time in his life he understands what Christ means to the world.

> Christ is arisen!
> Blessed the loving one
> Who hath been firm through the
> Saddening and weal-bringing,
> Soul-testing trials.

That is too much for him. The story may not be literal fact, but it is better than fact. It is true, for it touches the real man in him. He feels that the heroism of Christ is true manhood, while he himself is a coward, seeking refuge in the dust. He learns that man must look for his satisfaction neither in mere nature nor in mere spirit, but in spirit struggling with nature, in human life with all its conditions. "Oh, ring on!" he cries, "ye sweet songs of heaven! The tear wells, the *earth* has me again." At last the man, as God knows him, has conquered the doctor, as Mephistopheles knows him. Things do not look very promising for the latter's wager. The scene closes with the song of the lonely, deserted disciples, responded to by the song of the angels. The closing words of the last are:

> To you is the Master near,
> For you he is here!

Throughout the scene Faust fully represents the first stages of the great modern individualistic movement, which began in the sixteenth century, the *cinquecento*, as the Italians say. When men broke away from mediæval institutionalism they sought satisfaction in magic (Paracelsus, etc.), in humanism, in a high-flown neo-Platonic

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idealism, which made them wish for death; and they were at last brought back to sympathy with human life through the story of Christ and a belief in his resurrection, or perhaps, more strictly, by the real resurrection of his spirit in man, that is, by an active, practical, beneficent Christianity. It is just as true in the spiritual world as in the physical that only life can kindle life. Philosophy, science, and all the rest are mere chemical compounds, out of which there is no spontaneous generation. There is a sense, and that too a not very remote one, in which Christ is the life of the world. So, at least, Goethe thought.

Faust, resolved to look for salvation by mixing with human life, soon finds an opportunity of doing so. On the first day of Easter he and Wagner go out and mingle with the gay crowd of pleasure seekers outside the gates of the city. This gives the poet an opportunity of painting for us the condition of society at the time of the Reformation — society as it had been made by the very system from which Faust is breaking away. He has overloaded the picture, as is the wont of all Germans; but it is, no doubt, correct, and it is not at all elevating. The people are half animal, sunk in ignorance, good nature, and superstition, in one word, utterly unawakened — unaufgeklärt. They show a superstitious reverence for the great Doctor Faust, who, knowing what he is, feels keenly the mockery of it all. Towards evening Faust and Wagner seat themselves upon a stone on a hillside, and Faust gives way to old remembrances, which show that he has had those early religious experiences which ever after make a man serious in spite of himself. Alas for

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the man who has not had them — to whom, once at least, the heavens have not broken open to their highest! Without them Faust could not have had that strong aspiration which is declared in the end to be the ground of his salvation. But now how different is his condition! His whole relation to the world, all his science, seems but a sea of delusion, from which it is almost hopeless to seek to emerge. For the moment his despair is mitigated by the sunset aspect of vernal nature. The spring is in his blood, and he romantically longs to be able to follow the sun in his course over the continents and oceans of the world. Wagner thinks such notions are whims—he himself occasionally has them; the real joys are to be found in books. "When one unrolls the grand old parchment the entire heaven descends to you." Faust's reply shows us the source of his trouble:

Thou art conscious of but the one impulse;
Oh never learn to know the other!
Two souls, alas! dwell in my breast,
And the one is striving to sunder itself from the other:
The one with flesh-and-blood passion clings to the world with riveting organs;
The other rises violently from the dust to the fields of lofty ancestors.

The two spirits, of course, are the spirit of individuality or partiality, which seeks personal satisfaction, and that of universality, which finds satisfaction in the vision of the whole course of history as the revelation of one supreme idea or purpose. We might call the one the spirit of subjectivity, the other the spirit of objectivity. These struggle in Faust's breast, and the former, suppressed by many years of objective study and asceticism,

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is now threatening to take revenge. The Greek spirit, for which the world is a space world, is threatening to conquer the Christian spirit, whose world is a time world. In fact, Faust is undergoing a reaction in favor of the flesh. Looking up into the present sky, he prays that if there are any spirits of the air they will descend and lead him to new and many-colored life (neuem bunten Leben). Wagner begs him not to do anything so risky, and gives an account of the air spirits and their mischief. And the warning is not out of place, for Faust in a moment sees a poodle running in circles round them, a very mysterious poodle indeed. Wagner sees nothing remarkable about the poodle, but Faust takes it home with him.

We hear, at the present day, a great deal about double personalities, of two souls living in the same bosom. The thought was a familiar one to Goethe, and he has given it expression in *Faust*. The poodle, which, as we shall soon see, develops into Mephistopheles, is nothing but the spirit of subjectivity, which Goethe has externalized, just as Dante did enlightened reason in the person of Vergil (compare the two externalizations), for dramatic effect, and in order to avoid the dramatic absurdity of soliloquies. Mephistopheles does the very thing that the subjective spirit in Faust wishes to have done. It is needless to remark that all ethical systems are but devices intended to reconcile the subjective with the objective spirit in man. Faust's trouble, of course, comes from their conflict.

No sooner has Faust returned to his study than a very interesting scene takes place between the two spirits. His day among the realities of life and nature has waked

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in him "the better soul," in which there stirs the love of God and the love of man, i.e. the universal spirit. But at the same time the poodle begins to be troublesome, to run about and sniff. He is told to take his place behind the stove, on the best cushion (Mein beſtes Kiſſen geb' ich dir), and be a welcome, quiet guest. The better spirit continues: "Ah, when in our narrow cell the kindly lamp burns again, then there is light in our bosom, in the heart that knows itself. Reason begins again to speak, and hope again to blossom. We long for the waters of life, ah me! for the source of life." That is, the soul seeks to rise above itself and its own reason, to its fount (Urquell), in which alone is satisfaction. This is the fundamental truth of all mysticisms, yea, of all religions, and no one knew this better than Goethe.

But again the worse spirit breaks in, growling this time, and makes the better spirit feel all the difference between the two. Again Faust continues his musing. The enlightened reason is, indeed, a great joy; but it lasts only for a brief time. Its waters do not well up eternally. Hence the soul, which imperiously demands perpetual satisfaction, must look higher, namely, to revelation. Accordingly Faust turns to the New Testament, and indeed to that part which contains the inner kernel of its special message, the core of all its mysticism, — Ἐν ἀρχῇ ἦν ὁ λόγος, — and he begins to translate. It is needless to say that the doctrine of the Logos was borrowed by the writer of the Johannine gospel from Philo; and by Philo from Plato, Zeno, and ultimately from Herakleitos. According to this the world is the product of reason (λόγος, σοφία), therefore a purely ideal

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thing. Such a view does not satisfy Faust (as it did not satisfy Goethe). So after various failures he finds himself inspired by the "Spirit" to translate, "In the beginning was the act." Turn this back into Greek and it reads, "Ἐν ἀρχῇ ἦν ἡ ἐνέργεια." But that doctrine is the fundamental principle of Aristotle. The Spirit, therefore, has helped him to the revelation according to Aristotle (which, as is well known, was Goethe's ultimate creed). In fact, Faust has now arrived at the insight which, in a more or less conscious form, shapes, and will continue to shape, the modern world,—at the objective truth. So much for the better spirit. But alongside it is still the unreconciled worse spirit, the poodle, which becomes more and more troublesome as the other comes nearer the freeing truth. The poodle now not only growls, but barks and howls, at the same time swelling to the size of a rhinoceros, with fiery eyes and hideous jaws. Meanwhile the other spirits of subjectivity are watching outside, ready to aid their imprisoned companion, for so he is. Faust at once proceeds to exorcise the spirit with Solomon's Key. All his efforts fail until he uses a sign containing the name of Jesus (to whom it is said every knee shall bow). The creature then swells up all over with bristles, and Faust pronounces the words:

> Reprobate Being!
> Canst thou read him,
> The never originated,
> Unpronounced,
> Through all the heavens diffused,
> Blasphemously pierced?

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The creature now swells up till, as a mist, he fills the whole room; but when Faust threatens him with "the thrice glowing light, the strongest of his powers," he is forced to reveal himself. The mist sinks and leaves a traveling scholar, a character with which, of course, Faust was extremely familiar. Das alſo war des Pudels Kern! says Faust, in amused surprise.

Why, it may be asked, does Mephistopheles appear in this guise? The answer is easy. Because it was just in traveling scholars, such as Giordano Bruno, Lucilio Vanini, etc., that the spirit of individualism was specially embodied. Like Satan they walked to and fro on the face of the whole earth, trying the faith of men. We need such a class now above all things.

Faust asks the scholar's name. The latter refuses to tell it, on the ground that the question is petty in the mouth of a man who so despises the Word; but he is quite willing to tell him his essence (*οὐσία*) or act (*ἐνέργεια*). He is "a part of that power which always wills the evil, and always produces the good."

Further questioned, he explains:

> I am the spirit that continually denies,
> And that with reason; for everything that arises
> Deserves to be destroyed.
> Whence it were better that nothing arose.
> Thus all that ye call sin,
> Perdition, — in a word, the Evil,
> Is my peculiar element.

When reminded that he does not look like "a part," he says:

> I utter modest truth to thee.
> Although man, the little world of fools,

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Usually counts himself a whole,
I am a part of the part that at first was all,
A part of the darkness that bore itself the light,
The proud light, that now contests with its
Mother Night her old rank, namely, space.
Yet it does not succeed, for, despite all its
Aspiration, it cleaves fettered to bodies;
From bodies it streams; a body bars its course.
And so I hope it won't last long, but will
Go to destruction with bodies.

Here, of course, "body" and "darkness" are used as equivalent terms (compare Aristotle). Mephistopheles elsewhere maintains that the devils made the world.

It is obvious enough that this conception of Mephistopheles, thus expressed in the language of philosophy, is made up of many elements drawn from different sources. Mephistopheles is part of a power (δύναμις); he is a spirit of negation, a part of a part that once was all, a part of the darkness that once bore the light. Aristotle and Spinoza have about equal shares in this conception. Potence, or matter, says Aristotle, is by itself unknowable, or dark. "All determination is negation," says Spinoza. Again, Aristotle says, "Matter is the principle of individuation." To Goethe, then, Mephistopheles is simply the force of differentiation, which, if left to itself, uncounteracted by the power of integration, would destroy (zerſtören) the world by reducing it to mere atomic potentiality, and then destroy the atoms.

Mephistopheles' account of his attempts to put an end to the world are very amusing and quite in the spirit of Hegel. His efforts do not carry him far. "What opposes itself to the Naught—the Something, this solid world—

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I have never been able to do anything about it. Despite waves, storms, earthquakes, fires, sea and land remain quietly just where they were. And that cursed lot, the brood of beasts and men, there is simply no doing them any harm. How many have I already buried! And still there always circulates new, fresh blood, on and on in a way to make you crazy. From air and water, as well as from earth, a thousand germs emerge in the dry, wet, warm, cold. And if I had not reserved flame, I should have nothing of my own at all." (Fire, of course, is the force of dissolution.) Faust replies: "And so you raise your cold diabolic fist that clenches itself with impotent malignity against the eternally active, the healthful creative power. Try some other business, thou queer son of Chaos!"

Neither Faust nor Mephistopheles sees (Goethe, of course, sees clearly) that the latter is doing God's work in the most satisfactory way. Mephistopheles promises to consider the matter of finding a new business, and then asks leave to depart. It turns out that, having entered by the door, he must go out by the same, and the pentagram on the threshold stands in his way. He had managed to enter because the outward-turned corner of the pentagram was imperfect; but he cannot go out, because the inward-turned one is perfect. Faust, learning this, tries to hold him a prisoner and get some information out of him, some exhibition of his powers. Mephistopheles consents to give this exhibition, but uses it to send Faust to sleep. In fact he corrupts his imagination with a series of romantic visions, such as form the staple of romantic literature, — visions which call forth that feeble,

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maudlin gush and self-dilution, which is and always has been the preparation for moral laxity and foulness. Having put him to sleep in visions of romantic gush, he sends for an obscene animal, the rat, to gnaw away the inner point of the pentagram. Then he is free. Faust wakes up and finds that his poodle and the devil are beyond his power.

The first step in the downward leading of Faust, in his new life of reality, has been taken. He has turned away from that time world in which moral ideas are unfolded in history, a world which makes men serious and self-controlling, to the space world with its imagination-filling pictures, a world of momentariness and frivolity, and in that the fine point of his moral purity, his spiritual ascendency, has been gnawed away. He is now ready for further corruption. Indeed, in this condition he is ready to make a pact with the forces of corruption and dissolution. Thus, according to Goethe, the first step in the disintegration of the moral system of a man, or of a people — a disintegration preparatory to a new reconstruction — is taken when they turn from the study of moral evolution in history to enjoyment of the phenomena of nature. And this is true. We see it in Greece just as we see it in the time of the Reformation and the Renaissance. The song of the spirits might have been sung by Giordano Bruno, or by Tansillo, and we know how near their ditties carry us to that corruption of the two fundamental instincts of man which is the first step toward all other corruption.[1]

[1] Compare Dante, to whom the first sin is pride, with Goethe, to whom the first sin is corrupt instinct.

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II

MEPHISTOPHELES AT WORK

It was said by Hegel that religion, philosophy, and art have all the same content, and differ only in their modes of expressing it. I cannot but think that this is a grave mistake, due to a misapprehension of the nature of religion. This has a content all its own, with which philosophy has very little to do, while art has a content identical in part with that of philosophy and in part with that of religion. But in spite of this Hegel is entirely right in placing art alongside philosophy and religion, as having a most serious and all-embracing content. Of course this is true only of great art, — world art, if we may coin the expression, — and of such art there is not a great deal in the world. The late Professor Green said, "Philosophy has a history, but it is a history that is summed up in a few great names." The same thing is true of art, and notably of literary art. The world poets can almost be counted on the fingers of one hand. To these, conclusions drawn from literature in general do not apply. The works of ordinary literature reveal all their depth at the first or second reading. This is true even of the works of Sir Walter Scott, Thackeray, George Eliot, etc. It is true of all French literature, I believe, without exception. But it is very different with the products of the world poets; they reveal greater depths the oftener

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and the more closely we read them. I remember hearing James Russell Lowell say that he had just finished reading the *Divine Comedy* for the fiftieth time and found new meanings in it; and Robertson of Brighton, that man of exquisite insight, has told us that when he read *Macbeth* for the twentieth time he began to find out what it meant. Such quotations might readily be multiplied; and yet there are people who, after reading the *Divine Comedy* or *Macbeth* once or twice, are ready to pronounce upon them with the greatest assurance, and to tell exactly how much they contain. Such persons always remind me of a lively young man whom I once met coming out of the Pitti palace in Florence, and who asked me the way to the Boboli Gardens. After pointing these out to him, I asked him whether he had made a study of the Pitti palace. "Yes," he said brightly, "I have been two whole hours in it, and have seen everything, — nothing very interesting." When I told him I had been in it for a month and had seen but a portion of it yet, he looked at me as one looks at a born fool, and walked off in silence to the Boboli Gardens — I suppose to do them in ten minutes. I have a great admiration for such people, but at the same time I have always a cruel suspicion that perhaps they have not seen quite all there was to see. And so nowadays, when I have read *Faust* and the *Divine Comedy* at least fifty times each, and they have grown upon me in depth and meaning with each reading, I cannot but feel great admiration for those persons who, after reading them once or twice, are ready to tell us that they have seen "everything in them, — nothing very interesting," or

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profound. At the same time I always have a lurking suspicion that they have not seen everything there was to see. Such persons are pretty sure to accuse the man who sees more than they do of reading just that amount into the poem, — assuming, of course, their own rapidly gained insight to be the measure of all possible insight, nay, of all possible content intended by the poet.

So much I say here by way of apology to those who may find that *Faust* means more to me than it does to them. Let me assure them that I should be only too proud to think that I could add anything to the thought of a Goethe, the greatest poet for two hundred years, and that I shall not quarrel with their more generally accepted view. I hold that true poetry may contain all the content of philosophy and much of that of religion, — presenting it, however, in its own form, which is always individual and concrete. *Faust* is just such a form; but its content, I believe, is the entire spiritual movement toward individual emancipation, composed of the Teutonic Reformation and the Italian Renaissance in all their history, scope, and consequences. The subject is, of course, a vast one, and it may perhaps have to be admitted that Goethe, in trying to find concrete embodiments for its various phases, — embodiments suited for dramatic presentation, — did not always succeed, but had sometimes to stoop to mere allegory, which, of course, is always anything but dramatic. A subject of such vastness is certainly not easy to handle even in a philosophy of history, to say nothing of a poem. Perhaps the only form suitable for such a subject would be a Wagnerian opera. I do not know.

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But to return to our subject. We left Faust at the moment when his worse soul, his mere subjectivity, externalized as Mephistopheles, had gnawed away the apex of his spiritual pentagram, and so got beyond his control. Up to this point Faust's internal disintegration has been all within his own consciousness; it has affected nothing in the outer world. Now that Mephistopheles has got loose, the case is different. Faust has lost self-control. When he returned from the Easter day's excursion his lower self appeared to him in the form of a traveling scholar, a character common enough in those days, when men were breaking away from their fixed places in the ecclesiastical and feudal system, and satisfying their longing for change by wandering, like Satan, over the whole earth, and gathering and promulgating strange ideas. Now that he has lost self-control, this same lower self, thrice invited to enter, appears to him as a licentious young sprig of nobility, a gay Lothario with silk mantle, plumed hat, gold-braided doublet, and dagger, inviting him to don the same attire in order that, "detached and free, he may experience what life is," — such is the cant phrase among libertines. Faust at once shows the change that has come over him through the corruption of his emotions by becoming violently querulous and impatient (as all men do who have lost their objective self), longs for a blind, tumultuous life of passion, curses his own weak sentimentality in having allowed the sound of the Easter bells to frustrate his plan of suicide, curses every tender and human feeling, aspiration, and relation, curses even faith, hope, and love, and, above all, the great Christian virtue of patience. His

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words remind us strongly of those of the souls of the damned, uttered before they enter hell, words in which they take final leave of God and all his institutions and means of grace. Faust too has now completely taken leave of the mediæval Christian world with all its institutions, virtues, hopes, and fears. For him that world has gone to wreck and ruin. But he is not on his way to hell for all that. Underneath all his mad impatience there is a soul of sincerity that must and will build up another world for him. The invisible spirits of restoration sing:

Thou hast destroyed it,
The beautiful world,
With powerful fist.
It sinks, it sunders!
A demigod hath shivered it.
We carry the ruins
Over into the Naught,
And wail
Over the lost beauty.
Mighty (one)
Of the sons of Earth,
More glorious
Build it again;
In thy bosom build it up!
New life-career
Begin
With sense undimmed,
And may new songs
Sound over it!

The old world was an external, institutional, æsthetic world; the new one is to be internal, personal, moral. Therein he will begin a new life career with senses

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undimmed by external accretions, and a new world of art will be the result, the art of individualism.

Mephistopheles pretends that this song is sung by the smallest of his minions, who wisely advise him to leave his solitude where all his senses and juices are stagnating, and fling himself into the wide world.[1] Mephistopheles adds his advice and offers to be his servant in all ways, on condition that in the other world (drüben) Faust will do as much for him. Faust, who has bidden farewell to all old ideals and henceforth recognizes nothing as real but this world, readily agrees to this. This piece of seeming frivolity and pessimism contains, after all, a saving germ of truth; for it is perfectly certain that unless we can find satisfaction in this world there is no guarantee that we shall find it anywhere. The rationality of this world furnishes our only ground of hope for rationality in any world, and Faust is perfectly right, and expresses the manly spirit of the modern world, when he demands that this world shall be satisfactory. At the same time he is so perfectly certain that a "poor devil" like Mephistopheles, who has no comprehension of man's mind (Geiſt) or high aspiration and can offer only things that perish in the using, can never satisfy him, that he is willing to enter into a pact with him, that if ever he can do so even for a moment, he (Mephistopheles) may do with him anything he chooses, and at Mephistopheles' request signs a deed to that effect with his blood — the earnest of his whole person.

[1] It is curious to see how Faust now allows Mephistopheles to interpret his best inspirations for him.

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It is, of course, easy enough to see that Mephistopheles from the beginning is playing a losing game, for the simple reason that he has not the least comprehension of Faust's spiritual nature or of what will satisfy it. The things of the spirit are entirely beyond the reach of the flesh. It must be observed here that though Faust gives himself up to Mephistopheles, he has no notion whatever of giving himself up to a life of coarse self-indulgence, like that wretched creature, Marlowe's Faustus. On the contrary, what he wants is experience, experience of the most stirring, thrilling, painful kind. "The thread of thought is broken," he says; "I have long loathed all knowledge (i. e. theory). Let us quench glowing passions in the depths of sensuality. Let us fling ourselves into the rush of time, into the rolling of events. Then may pain and pleasure, success and disgust, alternate as best they can; only in restlessness does man actualize himself." Here, of course, we find the feverish reaction against the contemplative, thought-mildewed life of the Middle Age. Mephistopheles is quite willing to satisfy Faust in all this, thinking, of course, that his only aim is the enjoyment of pleasure. "Only pitch in and don't be particular." The more Faust does so, the sooner will Mephistopheles possess him. But Faust has no such thoughts. "You understand," he impresses upon Mephistopheles, "this is no matter of pleasure. To wild revel I devote myself, to the most painful pleasure, to enamored hate, to refreshing disgust. My bosom, that is now healed of its impulse to knowing, shall henceforth close itself against no pain; and all that is ordained for the whole of humanity I will enjoy within my inner

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self, with my spirit grasp the highest and the lowest; heap its weal and woe upon my bosom, and so widen myself out to its self, and, like itself, at last go to shivers!"

What is it that Faust really means here? This simply: Having cast aside, as vain, all those institutions through which man becomes, as to experience, the heir of all the ages, he sets out to obtain all experience at first hand; just as if a man, ignoring our whole present industrial and commercial system, should without tools undertake to make his own living off an unbroken prairie. This, of course, is a piece of folly due to a reaction against excessive institutionalism; but Faust, nevertheless, in his dark striving is still conscious of the right way. His insight that man, in order to be man, must not be a mere shred or fragment of humanity, but the whole of it, is the very truth that gives individualism its value and deprives it of all harmfulness. This was the truth that Socrates labored to teach, as against the sophists, who did not recognize universal humanity in the individual man. Of course, Mephistopheles has absolutely no comprehension of such a position — he, the arch-sophist, the spirit of partiality. His long experience — and the spirits of partiality are always strong on experience, which they never get beyond to any truth — tells him that the whole is made only for a god, who alone finds himself in eternal glory. Devils are in darkness and men in a mixture of day and night. Had not Faust been sobered down and humiliated by his experience with the earth spirit, he would no doubt have answered, and most pertinently, "But I am a possible god, and therefore I demand the experience

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of one." What he does say is, and it amounts in reality to the same thing, "But I will" (Allein ich will) — I will have this universal experience.

It is against this "I will" that Mephistopheles' arts come to grief on all occasions. He, however, makes another foolish attempt. Imagining that Faust wants experience only for the purpose of pluming himself on it before the world, he advises him to associate himself with a poet who will idealize him, ascribing to him all the virtues and so letting him have all the glory of them without the tedious process of actually acquiring them. We can see from the fact that Mephistopheles suggests a poet for this purpose that he has not yet invented reporters. Faust pays no attention to this last suggestion, but goes on maintaining that he must acquire the crown of humanity. Mephistopheles reminds him that however much experience he may get he does not thereby acquire any new power which would bring him nearer to the might of God. If he wants really to add to his power, he must get those extensions of hands and feet called property, — a lesson which the world represented by Faust has not been slow to learn. When Faust hesitates Mephistopheles shouts: "Come on! let alone all thinking and leap straight into the world! I tell you, a fellow that speculates is like a beast on a barren heath, led round and round by an evil spirit, while all about lies fresh, green pasture," — a saying which some unaccountable people have supposed to be an expression of Goethe's own opinion, as if he were identical with Mephistopheles.

Just when Faust has made up his mind to abandon his chair and his intellectual labors and follow Mephistopheles,

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a student is heard in the passage; and on Faust's declaring that he is not in a condition to see him Mephistopheles declares that he will. Accordingly he arrays himself in Faust's cap and gown, and greatly enjoys playing the professor. Faust, meanwhile, goes to prepare for leaving. Before the student is admitted Mephistopheles utters a little monologue, in which he plainly expresses his aim with Faust. Having already made him despise reason and science, all he has now to do is to degrade his spirit (Geiſt), his unacquired personality, which, as he says, Fate gave him. This troublesome Geiſt is always pressing forward with overhasty aspiration and overleaping the joys of earth. In order to tame it down he will drag Faust through the excitement of wild life, and by corruption of his lower nature make him long more for material satisfactions than ever he has done for immaterial ones. In a word, as a counter irritant to Faust's inflamed spirit he will inflame his passions. Mephistopheles is an admirable psychologist, despite all his ignorance of the soul and its real needs.

The student now appears before the new professor, who personates Faust, and this gives Goethe an opportunity of portraying for us at once the effect of the Mephistophelian disintegrating spirit of individualism on the universities in the sixteenth century and later, and also the circumstances which made Faust what he is. The callow student is merely the youthful Faust.

He is a good, wholesome, natural fellow, with a great deal of youthful, somewhat blind enthusiasm, lusty instincts, and a very vague idea about what he wants to do in life. He expects the great Doctor Faust to block out

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his career for him, and, after some very natural youthful talk, begins by asking the pseudo-Faust what faculty he shall enter, assuring him of his earnest desire "to understand everything in the heaven above and on the earth beneath — science and nature." Here, of course, is Faust to the letter. But the youth has other desires — he would like a little freedom and pastime on fine summer days. Here also is Faust to the letter. Here we have the two spirits or souls which Faust found dwelling in his bosom, and of which the one had separated from the other. Mephistopheles does his best to separate them in the callow student, by suggesting a most rigid and unattractive discipline for the better soul, and a most alluringly licentious outlook for the other. In no place in the whole work is Mephistopheles more clearly the devil than in this: in none does he work such fundamental and all-pervasive mischief. First the student is to devote himself to dry, formal logic, which will deprive his thought of its natural gait and make it walk on stilts. And here again Mephistopheles shows how excellent a psychologist he is. Herbart would have rejoiced in him. While recommending formal logic, he knows that at the same time (zwar) "the fabric of thought is like a weaver's masterpiece, in which one tread moves a thousand threads; the tiny shuttles shoot backwards and forwards, the threads flow invisibly, one stroke makes a thousand connections. Then comes the philosopher and proves to you that it must be so. The first is so, the second so, and therefore the third and fourth are so; and if the first and second were not so, the third and fourth would never in the world be so. And everywhere the students

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praise all this; but for all that they have not become weavers. Whoever tries to know and describe anything living, tries first to drive the spirit out of it; then he has the parts in his hand; there lack only — pity it is — the spiritual bond of all. Chemistry calls it nature's grip, mocks at itself, and knows not How." Never was the relation of logic and dialectic to the real, living process of thought better described. The bewildered student remarks at last, "I can't quite understand you." If he had, Mephistopheles would have spoken quite differently. Even the devil can afford to tell the truth when he is sure of not being understood. After logic the student is advised to take metaphysics, and in that study seize profoundly what won't fit into any human brain. In fact he must learn to deal in words without attaching any meaning to them, to commit the whole thing to memory out of a text-book, and yet, when he goes to the lecture room, take notes vigorously, as if the Holy Ghost were dictating. All this the student feels quite equal to, but he still insists upon the professor's choosing a faculty for him. Mephistopheles accordingly goes over each of the four faculties, except jurisprudence, and gives an account which is admirably true of each, the truth being that they are already so completely bedeviled that this is by far the best policy. The account of theology is particularly cynical and just. When he comes to medicine he is still more cynical, but he manages to draw a picture of the physician's calling which appeals powerfully to all that is lowest and most fleshly in the young man. "That looks better!" says the young man; "one sees Where and How. . . . I swear to

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you it's all like a dream." The youth is started on a career of corruption. Before leaving he asks Mephistopheles to write a motto in his album. Mephistopheles writes the old, all-effective words of the tempter, *Eritis sicut Deus, scientes bonum et malum.* After the student has gone Mephistopheles remarks, "Follow only the old saying and my cousin, the snake; you will certainly one day feel anxious about your likeness to God." Mephistopheles' motto, of course, expresses the very principle of his own activity. Man does rise to likeness with God by developing disintegration and contradiction, which by themselves are evil, and again reducing these to a higher unity. This is the very principle of the process of evolution. Mephistopheles means the evil, and does the good.

Faust now reappears, ready to follow Mephistopheles into the world — first, as the latter says, the little world, and then the great world. The little world is, of course, the world of personal interests; the great world the world of human interests. The former is traversed in what remains of the first part, the latter in the second part of the poem.

As far as we have gone Faust has been disintegrated in his intellectual part, having in consequence cast aside all science and concluded that we can know nothing; and in his higher emotional part, the result being that he has cursed all the higher spiritual emotions and all the institutions in which they find satisfaction. There still remain uncorrupted the two fundamental instincts out of which the higher emotions grow. So long as these are intact there remains the possibility of the ultimate

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restoration of Faust. Mephistopheles' great aim now, therefore, is to corrupt these also. If he can succeed in that and make Faust find satisfaction in either of these instincts, his wager will be won and Faust be his.

These instincts are hunger, or the nutritive sense, and sensual love, or the reproductive sense — the latter, it has been said, a continuation of the former. At all events the former, the evolutionists tell us, is the original form of all our selfish or egoistic qualities; the latter, of all our altruistic ones. Both these instincts are equally necessary for a sane existence; so that, if either of them is corrupted, such existence becomes impossible. All vice, in the last resort all our personal and social troubles, spring from a corruption of one or both of them. Accordingly Mephistopheles proceeds to try to corrupt first the one and then the other.

With a view to the first he takes him to Auerbach's cellar, to a *Kommers* of rollicking, wine-besotted students, something that must have had a certain attraction for Faust, recalling his own student days. The scene is admirably portrayed, showing the swinish results of the corruption of the nutritive sense (see the songs). The two travelers get into conversation with the students, and soon Mephistopheles proposes to give them wine better than what they are drinking. Then follows a scene which on its surface is mere deviltry but is really due to hypnotic suggestion. These dissolute, inebriated, alcohol-sodden creatures readily yield to Mephistopheles' arts, and so he soon makes each one believe that he is drawing from the table and drinking the wine he chooses. Another suggestion makes one of them seem to spill

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some of his wine, which bursts into flame and rouses great excitement among the revelers. They are about to attack Mephistopheles, who, however, by another suggestion, makes them all think themselves in a lovely country, in a vineyard, with the most tempting grapes ready to their hand. They begin, as they suppose, to pluck the grapes, when the glamor ceases and leaves the drinkers standing, each grasping his neighbor's nose. Then, and only then, do they recognize that they have been fooled. It is hardly any wonder that Faust runs no risk of being caught by such wild brutality as this. Mephistopheles' first attempt is an utter failure, and he knows it; but it has taught him something about Faust. He will try something more refined next time, and go about his work in a slower and gentler fashion. Storming will not do, that is clear; so now for cunning. The next thing is to corrupt Faust's sexual instincts. But that is no easy matter; Faust is a pure-minded man, and besides, he is about forty years old, so that the heyday of the blood is over. The first thing to be done, then, is obviously to arouse Faust's passions, and to arouse them in such a noble way that his better nature shall not shrink back in horror. Once aroused and brought into acute consciousness, they can be corrupted and inflamed, and the satisfaction of them made to seem a supreme aim. Accordingly, Faust is carried off to the witch's kitchen, in order to have a vision of alluring female loveliness presented to him, and to have the passion thereby aroused perverted by a philter, or love potion.

The witch's-kitchen scene is obviously a very complicated allegory, such as Goethe, in all the periods of

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his life was fond of writing (witness Das Märchen). Curiously enough, it was written in the Villa Borghese in Rome in 1788, when Goethe was about forty years old. The details of the allegory are not always easy to make out, but the outlines and the main gist are clear enough.

The witch's kitchen is the natural home of that vice which corrupts man's fleshly passion, the house of prostitution, with all the degrading influences, in the shape of literature, art, jugglery, gambling, etc., that naturally belong to it. The kettle of broth is the disordered, seething, beastly passions themselves; the witch is simply the corrupt woman; the figure in the mirror is corrupt art; the philter, which Mephistopheles himself cannot brew, but which he can teach how to brew, is simply the virus which a man cannot fail to imbibe when he associates long with such people and lives among such influences. I believe every one of the symbols in the scene is capable of interpretation, and I think I could interpret them, if it were worth while; but it is not, at least at present. The result of the visit to the witch's kitchen of the *demimonde* is that Faust is ready to see Helen in every woman.

Of course Mephistopheles' aim is to make Faust fall headlong into a vulgar, sensual passion for a common, degraded woman; but to his intense disgust he falls in love with a simple, gentle, pure-hearted girl of a very high type. In a word, he falls in love instead of into lust; the ideal element in him, here as always, gets the upper hand, and puts poor Mephistopheles to his wit's end.

Here, as in many parts of his works, Goethe has done his best to show that the mere sensual passion is, in

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man, the result of the devil in him, a piece of mere bewitchment, and, as we shall see, he has not a much higher opinion of what in German is called ſchwärmeriſche Liebe, the romantic passion which forms the staple of our modern novel literature. He has tried to show the true nature of this love in his *Elective Affinities*, a title evidently intended to suggest a chemical and not a moral relation.

Faust's passion is at first of this kind, and it is admirably portrayed. If I were giving a merely literary interpretation of the poem, trying to show how all the phases in the development of a passion have been treated, and expressed in forms of surpassing art, I should have to dwell on the Gretchen episode longer than on any of the other parts of the poem; for of all, it is, from a purely literary point of view, the most admirable, being hardly surpassed by anything in any literature, ancient or modern. But that is not my present purpose, which is to lay bare merely the philosophic or ethical skeleton of the poem. The real interest in the episode centers upon Margaret and not upon Faust. Just as Faust sums up in himself the highest intellectual manhood of the Middle Age, so Gretchen sums up its highest type of womanhood; and we are here shown the various steps by which the disintegrating process succeeds in undoing her. Faust is here the means which Mephistopheles uses for this purpose.

Gretchen must be reserved for another lecture. At present let us look back upon the course that Faust has run, the amount of disintegration that he has undergone. He has thrown aside (1) all knowledge and science, (2) all

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human social emotions, goods, and institutions, (3) all aims except personal satisfaction (which we must not take to mean mere pleasure — far from it). One would suppose that with all this segregation he was in a fair way to utter dissolution; but no! the integrating principle, which shall build up a new world in his bosom, is still there. He has abandoned all science, all ties and institutions, all universal human interests, which are external to him and imposed from without; but his whole effort is to build up in himself the total experience of humanity, which, however little he may understand it in its first, impulsive form, is the most complete conceivable aspiration after the universal, wherein alone is salvation at any time. It is, to be sure, individualism that Faust is seeking, and the freedom that goes with it; but it is an individualism in which each individual as a person is the universal. And this effort, however little we may comprehend it in its dark stress, is what gives to our modern world all the movement and meaning it has. This is the meaning of freedom, which we so much abuse. Nay, this is the true meaning of redemption, which is the aim of the great religions. Only when man the individual, instead of man as abstract humanity, rises to universality is there freedom; only then is the command obeyed, "Be ye perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect." This is the principle against which all our anarchisms, socialisms, and other "ismatic" efforts to reduce the person to the citizen, the whole to the part, will forever dash themselves in vain. As Hierokles said long ago, "It is the duty of each human being to become first a man, and then a god." And God is not jealous.

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III

GRETCHEN

Every form of art, like every other product of human culture, has a history, an evolution in which it passes from a weak, struggling, ill-defined partiality to an all-embracing universality. The lyric poem, which among peoples of incipient culture is a mere expression of individual feelings, becomes in Tennyson's *In Memoriam* a vehicle for all the most universal impulses that move humanity. The ballad, which among a simple rural population is a mere pastime for winter evenings, becomes in the hands of a Homer, a Vergil, a Dante, a Milton, a form into which the whole content of life can be poured. The little mime which all children delight to play has but to wait for Æschylus, Shakespeare, Goethe, in order to receive for its content the whole of human culture. And as with poetry so with prose. The novel, which thus far has been mainly a form for working out unprofessionally the details of certain semimorbid pathological conditions on the part of imperfectly regulated individuals, gives promise at last of becoming, in the hands of a few modern writers, the effective medium for the embodiment of all truth in living shape, — in a word, for the democratizing of truth. There is a very old strife between the pulpit and the theater as democratic truth agencies. I think that strife will, to a large extent, settle

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itself in the novel, which to-day is visibly tending to replace both. To be sure, most of our popular novelists are still paltering away with the old pathological amorosities, which, like the supernatural, have always a strong attraction for uncultured minds; but I think their trumpet of judgment has sounded, and the near future will give us world novelists.

Faust is a drama meant to embody the entire spiritual movement of an epoch, not, as philosophy would do, in a hierarchy of abstractions, but in concrete form, in a living, moving picture, a *tableau vivant et parlant.* But a drama which undertakes this must not present its subject merely from the man's side of humanity. It must present it also from the woman's and the child's, for humanity is a triune process, which cannot be comprehended if any element be left out. In the Gretchen episode Goethe has endeavored to give us a view of the modern movement toward the emancipation of the individual from the woman's side. In dealing with this we must bear in mind two things: (1) that Goethe is seeking to present to us, in Gretchen, the typical mediæval woman, as she was made by the institutions about her; and (2) that it is a German, deeply imbued with German notions in regard to women, that is making the presentation. And these notions are not altogether enlightened. In fact, in the history of woman "ante-American" means "antediluvian." But we must take our poem as we find it.

Gretchen, then, is the mediæval woman, the good woman, as society and church have made her. The question with the poet is, What will become of her,

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being such, in the general process of religious, ethical, and intellectual disintegration? What will become of her in the presence of a disintegrated woman and a disintegrated man? Martha is the one and Faust is the other. Let us consider her.

Gretchen is a charming, simple, truthful German girl, belonging to the middle class, that class in which all the virtues are most likely to ripen. She is well off. Her father left a handsome property (hübſch Vermögen), and the family might easily live in elegance. But her mother is a pious woman, pious in the mediæval sense, believing in retirement and simplicity of living, moral dependence upon the priest, and an almost cloistral seclusion for her daughter, whom she carefully trains in all simple household duties. Gretchen, therefore, is deeply religious in the Church's sense, a model of simplicity and housewifely virtue, a tender, gracious, adorable thing — a blessed virgin. But, like all persons who are reared aside from the currents of human life, she lacks experience, and in consequence has a very sensitive and responsive imagination. For the normal mind always demands a certain social content, and if experience does not supply this imagination will do so, with perilous consequences. Of course such a person will have an altogether exaggerated feeling with regard to social approbation and disapprobation, and will be ready to commit all sorts of intemperate deeds, crimes even, in order to secure the one and avoid the other. It is only in America that we have come fully to appreciate that for women, as well as for every one else, life swimming is best learnt in the stream of life.

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At the point where we left him Faust was disintegrated in his intellect, in his social emotions, and in his primitive altruistic instinct, to the point of seeing Helen in every woman, that is, of seeing in woman merely a means for the gratification of his selfish desire for all human experience, without regard to humanity.

Accordingly, when by accident he meets the pearl of womanhood in the street he salutes her as a French *roué* might, — Mein ſchönes Fräulein, — offering to accompany her home. Gretchen, with that unaffected dignity that belongs naturally to simple maidenhood, repulses him, treating him as he deserves. But neither of them remains unaffected by the encounter. The corrupt Faust is piqued by Gretchen's dignified, maidenly behavior. His better nature enables him to appreciate this, and thus, for a time, plays into the hands of his worse nature. It is often so in life. "The corruption of the best is the worst." Gretchen, likewise, though saved for the moment by the sudden spontaneity of her nobler nature, receives, as we learn afterwards, a seed impression that germinates and grows until it completely overshadows her. Faust at once insists that Mephistopheles shall put him immediately in possession of Gretchen, and this brings out from Mephistopheles a testimony to her character which is as clearly beyond appeal as the Lord's testimony to that of Faust in the prologue. "She is a perfectly innocent thing, that has just been to confession for nothing. Over her I have no power."

In reply to Mephistopheles' protestation that he can do nothing with Margaret, Faust threatens to break the

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blood compact, and hints that, give him seven hours' time, and he will conquer her without diabolic aid. But even Mephistopheles is forced to admit in all seriousness that it will take him a long time to get at Gretchen, and Faust has to seek assuagement for his passion by demanding some article that has touched her person, — a handkerchief or a garter, — a request which reveals a new fact, rather trying but serviceable to Mephistopheles. Faust's passion is not purely sensual after all. It is of the romantic order, ſchwärmeriſch, as the Germans say, and so contains an ideal element, — perilous enough, to be sure, but still ideal. Mephistopheles agrees to take Faust into Gretchen's room that very night, during her absence, and let him "swarm" to his heart's content in her atmosphere. He evidently sees a way through Faust's Schwärmerei to enable him to approach Gretchen without so terrifying her as to place her forever beyond his reach. The romantic gush of passion of two inexperienced natures — for Faust is as inexperienced as Gretchen — is thus made the effective means of her undoing. It is curious that Faust knows much better than even Mephistopheles how Gretchen is to be won. His Schwärmerei suggests making a present to Gretchen on the occasion of the visit to her chamber. "Ah!" says Mephistopheles, "presents at once? That's good! He'll succeed!" And he begins to plan about obtaining one.

Evening comes on and Mephistopheles sets about introducing Faust into Gretchen's room. Before Margaret leaves it, and while she is plaiting her hair, she soliloquizes about the gentleman who addressed her in

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the street. She by no means shrinks from the thought of him, as we might hope:

> He certainly looked very proper (wader)
> And belongs to a noble family:
> That one would read in his face —
> Otherwise he would n't have been so bold, —

a curious reflection on nobility. Poor Gretchen! her unschooled imagination has begun to work.

As soon as Gretchen leaves, Faust and Mephistopheles enter and immediately Faust breaks out into a gush of sentiment which must have amused Mephistopheles, who, however, allows him to have full swing. The fact is, he passes from a state of coarse lust to a state of the most acute romantic love, with all its melting, half lachrymose pathos and exaggerated, ebullient speech. But the picture of Gretchen's sweet, simple, pure — we might almost say holy — life is most delightful and one feels that Faust is not altogether wrong. Indeed the purity of Gretchen's life comes with overwhelming power upon Faust, and almost lifts him above his ignoble intent. When Mephistopheles breaks in upon his gush with "Quick! I see her coming," Faust shouts "Away! away! I shall never come back." And he means what he says: his better nature has been touched, but it is, alas! only by a sentiment as fleeting as the words in which it is uttered. Faust has not yet acquired any truly moral nature. His old external supports are gone and no new ones have yet taken their place. He is a being of passions and impulses, noble and ignoble. Sometimes the noble get the upper hand, sometimes the ignoble. In neither case is he a self-centered moral being, but

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only a battlefield of impulses. A jewel casket displayed by Mephistopheles and a few cynical, vulgar, passion-rousing words bring back the worse nature in Faust. The casket is left to initiate the seduction of Gretchen — with Faust's permission.

Gretchen, entering her room, finds it close, throws open the window with a certain sense of undefined dread, and sings an old ballad about undying love and a golden beaker, a ballad relating to things about as far removed as possible from anything in her life. Evidently she has not yet faced "life's prime needs and agonies." She can yet wander unconsciously in the fields of old romance, such innocence is hers. But the casket does its work. Gretchen, at first surprised at finding it, soon allows this surprise to be overcome by her woman's love of adornment. She adorns herself with the jewels and finds in the looking-glass how they improve her good looks. Naturally enough, there arises in her a longing for wealth, without which her beauty is almost a matter for pity. "Alas! we poor!" She has begun to be discontent with her narrow lot and to dream of a wider and higher one. But she is still entirely simple and sincere. She has nothing to hide from any one; so, as soon as her mother comes home, she shows her the casket. The mother immediately communicates with the priest, who, with many sanctimonious words and blessings for mother and daughter, appropriates the casket and its contents in the name of Holy Mother Church. Mephistopheles is, of course, or pretends to be, thrown into a towering passion by this result of his efforts; but the real truth is that the priest's act is his

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work. When Faust asks how Gretchen feels about it Mephistopheles replies: "She sits now restless, knowing neither what she wants nor what she should do; thinks of the trinkets day and night, and still more on him who brought them." Mephistopheles knows the effect of a brief enjoyment of desired things followed by the loss of them, — restless, unsatisfied longing, fatal to all disengagement and simplicity. Faust, sorry for Gretchen, demands another casket for her, and after some pretended hesitation Mephistopheles promises to furnish it.

We are now introduced into the house of Gretchen's neighbor, Martha, a "grass widow," and a very miserable sort of woman — just the worst sort of woman for a pure girl to associate with. She bewails in a sniveling way the departure of her husband, playing the hypocrite even to herself (not an uncommon thing), and ends off with a fit of crying in which she says: "Perhaps he is even dead! O me! if I had only a certificate of his death!" — one easily understands why. Mephistopheles, unseen, listens to all this, and discovers a way to bring Faust and Gretchen together.

In a moment Gretchen comes in, in great trepidation, her knees ready to give way under her, and announces that she has found a second casket, one much more splendid than the first. Her condition shows that already her disintegration has begun. This time she has *not* told her mother, between whom and her there is now this dark secret which will gradually work a complete alienation and leave Gretchen without the support of her best friend. Mephistopheles knows his business. Martha advises Margaret to say nothing about the affair to her

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mother, who would certainly, as before, carry it to the confessional. Margaret bedecks herself with the new finery, admires herself, and regrets that she cannot appear with it in the street and in church. Martha tells her to come over to her, and wear the jewels on the sly, spending a half hour before the mirror from time to time, till some festival, when she can put some little thing on, and if her mother says anything tell her some story. From all this Margaret, now in a state of excitement, does not shrink.

Before she can remove the jewelry there is a knock at the door, and Mephistopheles presents himself, coming, as we shall find, to bring the much desired news of Martha's husband's death. Before he can deliver his message he spies Gretchen, and offers to retire, on the ground that Martha has "distinguished company." Gretchen feels the envenomed compliment; but is still simple enough to tell Mephistopheles that she is only a poor girl and that the finery does not belong to her. Mephistopheles pays her a still more fatal compliment, telling her that it is not the finery that gives her distinction, but her person (Weſen) and her keen intuition. Few are the Gretchens that could resist that! Allowed to remain, Mephistopheles delivers his message, doing his best, meanwhile, to corrupt Gretchen with vulgar and ensnaring suggestions. The scene between Mephistopheles and Martha brings out in the clearest light the essential corruptness of the latter, and adds an important feature to the social picture of the time. When about to leave Mephistopheles says to Gretchen, "How is your heart?" Gretchen naïvely asks, "What do you mean,

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sir?" a reply which draws from Mephistopheles the compassionate exclamation, "You good, innocent child!" — words sure to leave the worst of all stings in her heart, shame at her own goodness and innocence. Before Mephistopheles leaves Martha begs him to give her a certificate of her husband's death. This is just what Mephistopheles has been working for. He has now an opportunity of introducing Faust as a witness to the certificate. He invites Gretchen to be present when they come. She says she should have to blush before the gentlemen. "Before no king on earth!" is the devilish reply. It is agreed that the four shall meet toward evening in Martha's garden behind the house. Poor Gretchen is in the trap.

Mephistopheles now goes to get Faust, and tells him of the success of his plan. The way is clear. He has only to swear before a judge that he was present at Herr Schwerdtlein's death. Faust has a terrible shrinking from lying and perjury; but Mephistopheles diabolically reminds him how many worse lies about far more sacred things he has boldly told in his professorial chair, — about God, man, the universe, — things he knew far less about than Herr Schwerdtlein's death. Faust yields the point, being now under the influence of an overwhelming romantic passion. This, sacred as it seems, is shown by Goethe to be no barrier against the greatest of crimes. Faust has here a terrible attack of Schwärmerei, in which he loses all sense of right and wrong.

The evening comes, and Mephistopheles and Faust meet Martha and Gretchen in Martha's garden. They at

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once pair off, Martha with Mephistopheles and Gretchen with Faust, and we get alternating scraps of their conversation. The couples are admirable foils to each other, and give us the two sides of the process of personal corruption. On the one hand we have the utterly corrupt woman in Martha, who would seduce the devil himself; on the other, the good but self-deluded, self-centered man trying to absorb in his overwhelming passion an innocent, confiding, somewhat romantic girl, whose moral strength is not within herself. The two conversations are admirably managed, and bring out all the characters in the plainest way. We may confine ourselves to Faust and Gretchen. Nothing could be more charmingly idyllic than Gretchen's unaffected simplicity, her account of her own pure, sweet home life, and her relations to her mother, brother, and sister, the last now dead. She deserves the good opinion even of the devil. On the other hand, Faust shows to perfection the effect of a blinding passion upon a man fundamentally good, but without fixed internal moral principle, upon a man who has cast away the moral crutches lent by institutions, and has not yet found the way to walk morally on his own feet.

There is an ancient story of a philosopher who, on being asked what kind of property one should strive to acquire, replied, "That which will swim out with a shipwrecked man." Now Faust and Gretchen, wrecked on the skerries of passion, find they have not that which will swim out with them. Their moral provision is mere luggage, external institutional portmanteaus and bath tubs, not an inner kingdom of heaven. And Goethe,

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whose aim in the whole work is to show the process by which the individual rises to autonomy, brings out the insufficiency of such provision and the need for a quite different one. A Socrates, with his fine, Hellenically poised nature, could pass from institutional to personal, or idiopsychological, morality without yielding a single point to Mephistopheles. Well may that personage say, as he does in the second part, Das Heidenvolk geht mich nichts an.

At the end of the walk in Martha's garden Gretchen escapes into a garden house, meaning that Faust shall pursue her. He does so, and their relation is sealed by a mutual declaration of love and a kiss. Mephistopheles breaks in upon their bliss, greatly to Faust's disgust. Faust offers to take Gretchen home; but she declines on account of her mother — her external conscience. Both Faust and Gretchen are now left with nothing but an irrational passion to guide their conduct, to give tone and color to all their words and thoughts. We are now going to see the value of even the purest and most overwhelming sentiment, when self-centered, as a guide through life.

Here there follow two scenes, in the former of which we are shown the effect of this sentiment upon Faust, in the second its effect upon Gretchen. Faust we find wandering in romantic solitude, among rocks and caves, enjoying that physical intoxication in the presence of operatic nature of which the Germanic heart is so fond. Gretchen's kiss has at last brought him into that living contact with nature after which he strove when he conjured up the earth spirit. Now all the forces of nature

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thrill through him, and he feels a gushing sympathy with all its sights and sounds, particularly the wild, primeval, savage ones, such in fact as Dante puts in his hell. The thunder and lightning, with their long reverberating echoes, the crash of falling trees, the wild cavern in which he can take refuge and behold the storm, the monstrous and weird figures of ghostly story, — all these are now the delight of his deeply moved breast (die tiefbewegte Bruſt).

Wild as these tumultuous feelings are, they are the expression of his better self, over against which comes up, in sad contrast, the passionate movement of his worse self, — the cold, impudent (kalt und frech) suggestions of Mephistopheles, which stir up in his bosom a wild fire of longing to be in the embrace of Gretchen. "And so," he says, "I hurry from appetite to enjoyment, and in enjoyment I languish for appetite." "Speak of the devil and he 'll appear." Mephistopheles appears at once, and does the very thing that Faust speaks of. Here we have an admirably worked-out colloquy between romantic sentimentality and lust, in which, of course, the latter carries the day. Mephistopheles even knows how to use Faust's tender and more humane feelings to entrap him, while he sneers in the most cynical way at his romantic enthusiasm and his lofty intuition, that divine faculty so sure to be claimed by those who are deficient in the human ones. Thus the result of Gretchen's kiss upon Faust is to throw him into an inner conflict, in which the wild mania of enthusiastic love that includes all nature struggles with the irritations of fleshly passion, and produces utter confusion of the moral sense. This comes

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out strikingly a little later on in the fine scene of the mountain torrent.

In the next scene, in which we find Gretchen singing at her wheel in her lonely room, we see the effect of Faust's kiss upon her. The song, "My peace is gone," is world-famous. What a contrast between it and her last song, the old ballad about the King of Thule! How real it is! how truly the expression of her own state! Restless, sore-hearted, she longs but for Faust. The world without him is the grave — or mere gall and bitterness. Head and sense are utterly wrecked. She has no life at home or abroad but in the thought of Faust, in restless longing for him. And poor thing! she longs for him in terms of sense — there is not a spiritual note in all her passion. His gait, his form, his smile, his glance, his speech, the pressure of his hand, his kiss, are what she rolls as sweet morsels under her tongue, and the more she does so the more her peace is gone and her heart sore. She longs to embrace him, to seize and hold and kiss him, to kiss him as long as she pleases, and to swoon or die under his kisses. Having reached a pathological condition like this, so closely bordering on insanity, she will, of course, stop at nothing. Against such a condition the frail external supports of her moral life are powerless, and she has no internal ones. Her fate is sealed.

The first kiss has roused the whole of that part of both Faust and Margaret which lies between the purely animal and the purely human and partakes of the intensity of both without the restraints that belong to either. Mephistopheles has stirred Faust, in his romantic solitude,

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to seek again poor, suffering Gretchen, and a meeting is arranged, as before, in Martha's garden. Gretchen comes to this ready, though unconsciously so, to take the last, fatal step; Faust, ready to accept her sacrifice at the risk of poisoning her mother. The value, both for art and psychology, of this scene between the two lovers is that it brings into clear relief the nature of the ethical principles upon which Gretchen has to rely for support in her sore trial. They are purely external and formally religious. She begins by questioning Faust about his religion, fearing that he does not care very much about it. Faust tries to waive her questions; but she will not be put off. She wants to know if he honors the holy sacraments, goes to mass and confession, and lastly, if he believes in God. Faust deftly avoids all these questions but the last, thinking he can by words bamboozle the poor girl with reference to it. The other questions would have required a definite yes or no, neither of which he is willing to give; but this one can be covered up in a fine mist of delusive words. There is perhaps not in all literature a more splendid piece of self-deception and involuntary hypocrisy than Faust's answer to Gretchen's "Do you believe in God?" "My love, who dare say, 'I believe in God'? Mayst ask priest or sage, and their answer seems only mockery of the asker." And when Margaret sadly interjects "And so you don't believe?" he proceeds with a gush of meaningless romantic words, so dexterously calculated to strike the vague, unmoral, romantic sense, that wiser people than Gretchen — indeed, I find, nearly all the readers of Faust, including some of the editors — have been taken in by it and

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suppose it to be really Goethe's conception of God. It ends with:

> Call it what thou wilt,
> Call it bliss! heart! love! God!
> I have no name
> For it. Feeling is all,
> Name is sound and smoke,
> Beclouding heaven's glow.

Poor Gretchen! she accepts such rubbish and thinks it is pretty much the same as what the priest says, only in "words a little different." And the sad thing is, she is not so very far wrong; her priest has no true conception of God, else she would probably not have been so easily deceived. Catholic Christianity was too much given to making the consciousness of the divine a mere vague feeling instead of a clear, definite consciousness of relation to an all-holy personality. We are thus shown the moral weakness of that form of religion in the great crises of life.

Still, Gretchen is not entirely satisfied, especially in the matter of Faust's companion. She has an inner shrinking from him, as all pure natures have from fundamentally evil ones. Faust tries to set her mind at rest, but she tells him she must now leave him. Faust, now completely confused, proposes a clandestine meeting under other circumstances, and does so in terms in which the sentimental and the carnal are so blended that they might well corrupt an angel. Margaret yields to their unholy spell, and even accepts from Faust, though with misgivings, a soporific for her mother, so that he may visit her safely that evening. Margaret now departs,

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her fate sealed, and Mephistopheles turns up. He has overheard the whole conversation, and cynically sneers at Faust for allowing himself to be catechised by a simple girl. Faust tries to defend Margaret with a little sentimental talk, to which Mephistopheles replies with "You supersensual, sensual wooer! a girl leads you by the nose." The scene ends with some violent talk on the part of Faust and some damnable cynicism on that of Mephistopheles, who rejoices in the impending ruin he has caused.

Such, in brief, is the history of the undoing (for this world) of Gretchen, the sweet, simple Gretchen whose purity rested upon two foundations, — pure, girlish sentiment and the religion of the confessional, — both of which readily give way before the gush of passion whose consequences are needed before the true moral self in her can be aroused and make sure her salvation. For this salvation sin is actually needed, and here again Mephistopheles, as always, wills the evil and works out the good. The disintegrated Gretchen will in due time redintegrate herself.

Gretchen is ruined. A bad artist would have stopped with this ruin, content to show us, as so many modern writers do, that in the moral world certain courses lead to hell, or its equivalent. These, of course, are the devil's artists, blind Mephistophelian pessimists, whose watchword is "Despair." But Goethe must show us all the stages by which, through her very disintegration (Zerſetzung, as the Germans say), she redintegrates herself. Mephistopheles, with all his wiles and resources, is not a match for this simple child, in whose heart sits God in the form of a right will.

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Now come four scenes in which we are shown how Gretchen comes to a consciousness of the nature of her deed as affecting herself. It takes a more awful revelation of herself to herself to show her its nature in relation to the universal, to God. And it is Mephistopheles that brings about this revelation.

The first scene is at the well, where she hears a neighbor gloating pharisaically over the downfall of another young girl, guilty in the same way as herself. Bärbelchen, to be sure, is a girl of a very different type from Gretchen, being a vulgar sinner; but the parallel strikes home all the same, and Gretchen learns her first lesson in universality,—that is, in humility and charity. Though she thus becomes sadder and wiser, she does not yet see her sin in its true light. She still hugs it in imagination. "Yet—all that drove me to it, God! was so good! oh, was so dear!"

The next scene brings before us Margaret, now aware that her sin has consequences which must bring it to the knowledge of the world. It is largely in the form of the world's opinion that her conscience has spoken to her, and she dreads it with almost abject terror. We find her before a niche in the city wall, placing fresh flowers before a picture or image of the Virgin and praying in agony. There is no truer or more earnest and touching prayer in any prayer book that I know of. Its tenderness, its pathos, its simplicity, are inimitable. Gretchen has run up against a moral world organized within herself; the result is inner conflict, moral agony.

In the next scene she runs up against the moral world organized outside of herself, the social world. Mephistopheles has again stirred up in Faust his lower

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passion, and the two return to pay Gretchen a visit. But meanwhile Gretchen's brother, the rough soldier and man of honor, extremely proud of his lovely sister, has heard evil tidings, dull, ugly reports, of her being visited late in the evening, and has come to satisfy himself by direct evidence. He is standing in the street before her door, and soliloquizing. Until lately his sister had been named in all the soldiers' toasts as the pearl and paragon of women, and he had sat in proud consciousness of being her brother. Now how changed is all! Instead of praise and the clinking of glasses, there is whispering, blind innuendo, and sneering. As soon as her name is mentioned he feels like a caught thief, and yet dares not say anything. While he is talking, up come Mephistopheles and Faust. He stands aside and listens to their conversation, which leaves no doubt in his mind as to his sister's unfaithfulness. Mephistopheles now tries to catch her attention by singing "a moral song, in order the better to befool her." As soon as he ceases Valentine challenges Faust; a duel takes place, in which evidently Faust would be beaten did not Mephistopheles treacherously lame the hand of Valentine, whereupon Faust stabs him and he falls. Faust and Mephistopheles escape under cover of darkness. Now comes a hue and cry, and all the neighbors rush out from the houses, among them Martha and Gretchen. The fallen soldier is soon recognized as Valentine, and Gretchen is in despair. Valentine tells the shrieking women to cease their howling, calls his sister to him, tells her bluntly that she is a strumpet, and warns her of the fate that awaits her. Gretchen is beside herself. Martha advises

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him to commend his soul to God, and not call down the divine wrath by such blasphemy. Valentine replies by calling her the worst of names, and telling her that if he could only rend her to pieces he should be sure of forgiveness for all his sins. Gretchen can only say, "Brother, what pain of hell!" and she means it; for she is in hell. Valentine replies: "I say, let tears alone. When you bade good-by to honor you gave me the bitterest heart wound. I go, through the sleep of death, home to God as a soldier and a man of honor."

Poor Gretchen! She is now all alone in a world that knows of her sin and its consequences — at least some of them. Her mother is gone, having never awaked from the drugged sleep into which she (Gretchen) had thrown her by means of Faust's soporific, supplied by Mephistopheles. Her brother has fallen in an attempt to avenge her honor. She is all alone in a cruel world, with that most awful of events which can befall a woman staring her in the face. To crown all, she knows nothing of Faust's whereabouts. He has left her to her fate — Mephistopheles has seen to that.

Nothing now remains but her religion, and so she goes to the cathedral during high mass. And here takes place that awful conflict between the good and evil spirits in her soul, the latter tempting her to suicide, the former dissuading her from it. Farther back, Mephistopheles, when trying to urge Faust to go to Gretchen, had said:

> [When such a head no issue sees,
> It pictures straight the final close.] [1]

[1] The quotations from *Faust* inclosed within brackets are taken from Miss Swanwick's translation. — ED.

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Now he tempts her to this, bringing up before her in succession her lost innocence, the sleep of her mother, unshriven, unaneled, gone over into the long agonies of purgatory or hell, her brother's blood, the impending birth of her child. Gretchen is in utter despair and has only one desire, — to get rid of these harrowing thoughts. But in opposition to the promptings of the tempter comes from the organ and the choir, rolling like thunder along the aisles of the cathedral, the Gregorian chant, with the awful words of the *Dies Irae*, depicting the terrors of the universal judgment, from which no suicide will enable her to escape. How wonderfully Goethe has shown the power of this inimitable hymn! The struggle goes on for a considerable time, the whisperings of the tempter alternating with the thunder of the organ. At last, at the words *Quid sum miser tunc dicturus?* she faints, and has to be carried out.

When she recovers she does *not* commit suicide; but, unable to remain in her old surroundings, wanders away, a wretched, homeless outcast in an alien world. In due time her child is born, and in her despair she at once drowns it — being, of course, no longer a responsible being, but a poor crazed thing. Margaret, in her sanity, would never have drowned her child. How strong the maternal instinct in her was we learn from that simple girlish account she gives of her little sister and the care she took of her. The body of the child is found, Margaret seized, brought home, accused of child murder, condemned to death, exposed to public scorn in the stocks, and confined in a wretched dungeon where she awaits her end in crazed terror. Mephistopheles has done his worst, but he has not got Gretchen. He will have to

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say of her at the end, as he said at the beginning, "Over her I have no power." There is not in all literature a sadder story than Gretchen's, and yet one sees how it is all only the outcome of her mediæval training, which has not fitted her to meet the bitter trials and sad experiences of life. Her nature, her Geiſt, as Mephistopheles would say, is fundamentally good, and will save her in a higher world than ours; but for all that she is not equal to the demands of ours. She is naïve, where she ought to be wise; childish, where she ought to be experienced; romantic, where she ought to be moral; dependent upon outside ritual and opinion, where she ought to be self-poised. All this is the result of the institutions under which she has grown up, — Church, society, family. It is they that have left her unable to cope with the movement the spirit of which is represented by Faust. The judgment passed on her is a judgment passed on them.

While all this is going on Mephistopheles is amusing Faust, and instead of trying now to send him to Gretchen he is doing his best to keep him away from her and in ignorance of her fate. Having noticed his fondness for dark, wild, monstrous, midnight scenery with weird noises and eerie sights, he thinks he can give him his fill of that, and perhaps bring about a moment in which he will say, "Oh, stay; thou art so fair!" So he takes him in the night to the wild, lonely Brocken in the Harz, on Walpurgis night, to a meeting of witches and "warlocks," that is, of all the forces that disintegrate society, of which the romantic tendency, that hysterical mysticism of nature, is itself one.

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It is impossible here to recount all the sights and sounds, all the deviltry, folly, and (to use a Scotch word) sculduddery that are met on the Brocken. It is simply hell let loose, with all the forms of low, selfish enjoyment that hell has to offer. But none of all the forms of gross personal delight has any charm for Faust; that, indeed, is not what he is looking for. They all tend to narrow even the individual down to the level of the brute, while he, however blindly, is, before all things, seeking to rise above his individuality and to widen himself out to the limits of humanity. But shortly before he leaves the Brocken he does see something, a phantom, conjured up apparently by his own disordered romantic imagination, of a "pale, beautiful child," moving slowly with her feet bound together, and reminding him, in a disturbing way, of Gretchen. Mephistopheles tries to make him believe that it is the Medusa, and that she is uncanny, and will with her look turn him to stone if he meet her and look at her. But Faust is not so easily deceived. He says, "In truth these are the eyes of a dead one, which no loving hand closed," and he recognizes the person of Gretchen beyond any doubt. The better spirit has part in this phantom. Mephistopheles, therefore, naturally scoffs, calls him a gullible fool, and tells him it is a phantom which "appears to every one as his own love" — or victim: which, indeed, is true, since it is the product of conscience and imagination. This draws from Faust the astonishing words: "What ecstasy! what suffering! I cannot tear myself away from this vision." All the foolish, soul-destroying mirth of the Brocken cannot draw from Faust a thousandth part of the interest

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that that one glimpse of suffering does. Compared with the other, that is an ecstasy of joy because it is truly a piece of earnest human experience. Faust observes something like a red thread, as broad as the back of a knife, about the phantom's neck. Mephistopheles, who dreads the result of this Luſt zum Wahn, draws him away as quickly as possible to witness a dilettante's play on a new theater, and there the two disappear — a proper close to a Walpurgis night.

We now hear no more of Faust until we meet him and Mephistopheles, on a dull day, in an open field. Faust meanwhile has learnt Gretchen's fate, and he now pours out all the vials of insane wrath upon Mephistopheles for having caused it and for having concealed it from him. Here Faust's better nature shows out luridly against that of Mephistopheles with his cruel, heartless cynicism and delight in human misery. This is the only scene in the play that is written in prose, and dead prose indeed it is — utter disharmony everywhere. The squabble ends by Faust's demanding from Mephistopheles the liberation of Gretchen. Mephistopheles at first pretends not to be able; but finally agrees to take Faust to the prison and liberate Gretchen by human means, viz. by drugging the jailer and getting possession of the keys.

The two start off together in the night on their black horses, and on their way pass the weird Rabenstein, or place of execution, where in the momentary glare of lightning they behold the obscene powers of evil preparing for a death — that of Gretchen, no doubt. No wonder that when Faust arrives at the prison the human

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soul in him has asserted itself, and he says: "A long-unwonted shudder seizes me; humanity's whole woe lays hold of me." Well may he say so, for the sum of human misery is there. He fears to face the result of his own selfishness, and no wonder; but at last, plucking up courage, he seizes the keys and enters Gretchen's cell, to find her lying crazed, on a bed of straw, singing significant snatches of old popular ditties engraved on the tablets of her innocent childhood's brain. The scene between the two lovers must be read carefully to be appreciated. I doubt whether there is anything sadder, more awfully pathetic, or more earnestly true in all literature. Margaret at first does not know Faust — thinks he is the executioner come to carry her to death, and breaks out into piteous wailings over her youth, her sin, her undoing, and begs him to spare her — she has done him no wrong! Then she begins to wander in utter confusion among thought phantoms bound together not by reason but only by horror. Her child is uppermost in her mind: she wishes to nurse it; she has fondled it all night; it has been taken from her and people say she killed it; she will never know joy again. The people are singing ballads about her; that is not kind of them.

Faust tries to make her recognize him, but in vain. She begs him to pray with her to the saints: hell is seething under the threshold — where Mephistopheles stands. At last, when he utters the words "Gretchen! Gretchen!" he starts a new succession of wild thoughts in her mind, thoughts bound together by love now — the old love. All her pain, suffering, woe, torment, prison

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chains, disappear now, and she is back in her old home, in the street where she first met Faust, in Martha's garden where he gave her the first kiss. And she clings to Faust and kisses him frantically, as she had wished to do in her second song. When Faust, too much horrified for such things, fails to return her kisses, she is utterly disappointed and heartbroken. When he tells her to come with him in all haste and be free, the word "free" starts a new association of ideas, bound together by outraged natural feelings. She recalls the death of her mother, the drowning of her child; the child brings up Faust and the old relation; Faust brings up the death of Valentine. She asks for his hand and finds it wet — wet with blood. She begs him to put up his dagger. Faust makes another despairing attempt to bring her to a sense of what he wants her to do, but all in vain; he only starts another aimless train of crazed ideas. Other attempts follow with no better result. Gretchen has no longer control of her thoughts; they run away wildly with her, through every scene of misery and joy, and of joy leading to misery, which her dear, narrow life has known. In such vain attempts the night of horror is spent. At last Faust almost shrieks, "Love! love! the day dawns!" That only makes Margaret think that what ought to have been her wedding day is going to be the day of her execution; and all the horror of the scene rises before her crazed imagination. She even realizes herself as dead — Stumm liegt die Welt wie das Grab! Faust calls out in despair, "Oh, that I had never been born!" But the consciousness of death at last proves like a waking from sleep. Gretchen at last is herself.

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But she is not going to follow Faust for all that; erſt recht nicht, as the Germans say — farther from that than ever. Mephistopheles, now dreading the dawn, shouts out pitilessly that all this useless gabble and hesitation must end, else they are lost; his horses are shivering. Gretchen, who has always had an instinctive horror of Mephistopheles, now realizes her true situation, realizes too that he wants her — Er will mich! Going with Faust now means to her giving herself up to Mephistopheles, and she is entirely right. Mephistopheles, of course, does not want her to go along; he thinks he can get her more easily by letting her die in her madness the death of a criminal. But she is no longer mad. Her situation, the choice that is before her, the meaning of her own actions, are all clear to her now. Her intellect is sane, and, as her will has always been right, she is now in a position to express that will in a truly moral judgment. And she who, but a year ago or less, had, through self-ignorance, fallen a prey to a blind romantic passion, and lost her peace and her virtue for the sake of it, is now ready, in the face of the most fearful odds, to defy that same passion and declare for the right. She knows now that she has forfeited herself to the right, and the right — the just law — shall have her. On the one side there are held out to her freedom, the man she loved and still loves, and all the joys that the world has to offer; on the other, an ignominious death at daybreak, with all its crazing horror. Never had the wrong choice more fearful odds in its favor; but she hesitates not a moment. When Mephistopheles heartlessly calls to Faust, "Come! come! or I'll leave you

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in the lurch with her," she now, with full consciousness of what she is doing, makes her choice:

> Thine am I, Father, rescue me!
> Ye angels, ye holy hosts,
> Camp round about to guard me!
> Henry, I shudder at thee!

Mephistopheles, with his keen malignity, calls out, Sie iſt gerichtet, that is, she has pronounced her own judgment, as every soul must. What a keen perception! But poor Mephistopheles does not know the sentence. It sounds from the tribunal from whose verdicts there is no appeal: Sie iſt gerettet — "She has saved herself." Losing herself in the universal right she has found herself. Mephistopheles calls to Faust to follow him, and as he does so he hears his own name called twice from Margaret's cell. The saved Gretchen is calling him to salvation, and evermore will call. But for the present he takes the other way. He has not found himself yet.

Gretchen is saved. She will give up her life at the Rabenstein in an hour; but that is an insignificant price to pay for salvation, and she knows it, having deliberately made the choice. In her bitter struggle with the dregs of the past all the illusions of things have vanished from her, and her true self, the source of all moral power, has risen up in all its majesty on the ruins of a fallen world. In herself she has found heaven, and she will, in the power of her own divinity, create a new world in which love without passion shall rule supreme. We shall meet her in that world further on.

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IV

IN QUEST OF THE "HIGHEST EXISTENCE"

Wer befehlen ſoll,
Muß im Befehlen Seligkeit empfinden.
. . . . . .
Was er den Treuſten in das Ohr geraunt,
Es iſt getan, und alle Welt erſtaunt.
So wird er ſtets der Allerhöchſte ſein,
Der Würdigſte! Genießen macht gemein.[1]

These words, uttered by Faust when he is about to reach the true, Aristotelian moral insight that man reaches his highest bliss not through enjoyment but by the exercise of his active energies, enable us to divide cultivated mankind into two pretty well defined classes. The first consists of those whose life is guided by a perfectly clear aim, to which every action and event, every good and every evil is strictly subordinate, and who lend themselves to enjoyment only that they may be the better able to struggle toward the end they have in view. The second class consists of those who have just aim enough to keep them out of the grave, but who

[1] [He who would command,
His highest bliss must in commanding find.
. . . . . .
To trusty ear he whispers his intent,
'T is realized, — all feel astonishment:
So holds he still the most exalted place,
The worthiest. Enjoyment doth debase!]

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are continually losing sight of that aim in transient, momentary, sporadic interests; who, instead of going straight on life's journey, sleeping and resting only where they must, loiter all the way, plucking flowers by the wayside, making little excursions into fields and woods, and dallying wherever opportunity offers. To the first of these classes belong all great men, to the second all dilettanti, using that word in its etymological signification. The former tendency, moreover, produces classic art, in which everything is perfectly subordinate to a single purpose and there are no little prettinesses having an independent worth of their own; the latter produces romantic art, in which such aim as there is continually tends to lose itself in a more or less confused mass of attractive, independent, detaining details. The former art we find in Æschylus, Sophocles, Dante, Shakespeare at his best, and Tennyson; the latter in Ariosto, Tasso, Milton (to some extent), and Goethe, and in nearly all modern novels and poems.

The romantic tendency was always strong in Goethe, and though, under the influence of Greek models, he tried to overcome it in middle life, writing *Iphigenie* and *Tasso*, it resumed its power over him after he passed that epoch. The "fragment" *Faust* (published in 1790) is almost entirely free from it; but in the first part of the poem, as published in 1808, and in the second part, it is extremely obtrusive. To this tendency we owe the overchargedness and utter, needless disproportion of the scene "Before the Gate" and of the "Walpurgis Night," and the very existence of the "Walpurgis Night's Dream." In the second part it affects everything, so that we have here

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a series of pictures aiming at exhaustiveness on their own account and but loosely strung together by the common aim of the whole poem. In a word, the idea is almost lost in a chaos of material masses. Goethe's seventy-five years, and the longing which age has for rest and dalliance, free from the restless spur of definite, energizing purpose, show themselves most distinctly in it from the first word to the last. Every part is overloaded, so that the poem is full of cracks and everywhere threatens to fall to pieces.

But, in spite of that, there is a thread of unity running through the whole, viz. Faust's redemption. He must win his and the Lord's wager. He has bet himself, his soul, against Mephistopheles' power to satisfy him with pleasure, and that bet he must win, getting both the pleasure and his own soul. It is worth while noticing that at bottom Faust's struggle is just between the two tendencies which, as we have seen, divide mankind, — the tendency to self-realization through will, and the tendency to linger and enjoy. Goethe himself never succeeded in overcoming the latter tendency, else *Faust* would have been another and a greater poem than it is. Dante's poem made him lean for many years ; Goethe never lost his adipose tissue.

The second part of *Faust*, to which we now address ourselves, turns out, when we strip it of its romantic unessentialities, much shorter than the first part. Its plot is extremely simple. Whereas in the first part Mephistopheles had tried to seduce Faust into self-satisfaction by pandering to his two fundamental instincts, the nutritive and the reproductive (hunger and lust), and

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had signally failed, in the second he tries to do the same thing through pandering to the appetite for social position and power, to the dilettante, æsthetic tendency, to the thirst for scientific attainment, and to the utopian, philanthropic, socialistic passion, — the four chief tendencies ruling that portion of mankind which has risen above animal appetite, but has not attained to divine consciousness and vision. Of course Mephistopheles utterly fails in all four of his attempts, although some of them — the æsthetic and the philanthropic, for example — bid fair to be far more successful than others. Faust, and no doubt Goethe himself, did learn in the end that lesson which the world is so slow to accept, — that the human soul does not find its complete satisfaction in anything that the earth has to give, even in the highest culture, but only in religion which points to the supermundane, to the supernatural, to a kingdom that doth not yet appear. Between the date of the publication of the first part (1808) and the time when Goethe seriously took up the second part (1824) sixteen years elapsed. (The date of the production of the *Helena* is uncertain ; it was originally meant for the first part.) In those years Goethe had passed from ripe manhood to old age, from a condition of moral struggle to one of quiet resignation. This change appears in the second part throughout.

When that part opens we find Faust just where we might expect, — back among the romantic beauties of nature, restless, sleepless, trying to shake off the horror of Gretchen's fate, des Herzens grimmen Strauß, des Vorwurfs glühend bittre Pfeile. One naturally asks why he did not seek refuge in religion, or in some great philanthropic

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devotion, as so many repentant sinners have done. The answer is obvious. He has taken leave of religion and of all institutions, cursed them indeed; and he is not yet ready to recall that curse. He does not see in the service to institutions any atonement for sin. Indeed, he has not seen his sin as a wrong against institutions, but only as an outrage against his own inner feelings, the humanity organized within himself. This is as it should be, from his point of view; but he cannot find in himself any atonement for sin, and he knows no God but an institutional one. His only refuge, therefore, is in nature, — in mountains, grass, trees, brooks, and starlit nights. Though this is poetically correct, it shows a sad want of moral appreciation in the poet, — to think that the pangs of remorse can be cured by a poultice of grass, moss, and starlight, even when applied by a party of elves with Ariel at their head. But having made Faust guilty, as he has done, and being forced to let him have all kinds of enjoyment that Mephistopheles can offer, he has no other resource. At all events Faust, after a night spent on a mossy couch, during which the elves sing to him and so by a kind of Christian science heal the wounds of his heart, rises up to greet the sun, with fresh pulses and new determination, breathed into him by the earth, "*to strive ever onward to the highest existence.*" Let us consider this expression well: it is printed in italics, and marks the change that Faust's purpose has undergone, through his sad experience. It marks also a change in the poet's own view. When Faust started out and made the pact with Mephistopheles his notion was, through sensational, boisterous experience, to widen his self out

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to the limits of humanity's self. Now his purpose is to "struggle ever onward to the highest existence." This is a very great change, a change from quantity to quality. Faust has learnt that it is less the amount of experience than the use we make of it that is of importance; also that the sum of humanity is a very different thing from the highest existence, which may often be best reached by avoiding a very large amount of experience. It is, in fact, this new resolve, this new ideal, that restores the world for Faust, that enables him to hear the sphere music, that makes him boyishly sensitive to every sight and sound of nature. The poetry here is charming — Wordsworth's best set on fire. Mephistopheles has now a new task. As long as Faust was merely trying to overtake the sum of human experience Mephistopheles might expect in some way to satisfy him. Now that Faust is trying to reach the highest existence and is using experience only as a means to that end, Mephistopheles' task is hopeless, though he does not know it. Nothing now will satisfy Faust but the highest existence, and that Mephistopheles, of course, has not in his power. Nevertheless, against his will he can help Faust to reach his end.

Faust has obviously come to believe that the way to the highest existence is through the culture obtainable through institutions. And, of course, he is so far right in this; only he allows Mephistopheles to distort the truth for him by making him believe that the culture in question is proportioned to the position one occupies in institutions. He is all the more ready to believe this seeing that he has already enjoyed all the intellectual

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culture of his time and found it utterly wanting. The result is that Mephistopheles seeks to satisfy Faust's demand for institutional culture by setting to work to obtain for him a leading position at the imperial court, the empire being the first of culture institutions.

There now follow two scenes, both of them atrociously overloaded, in which we are shown the condition of the political and social world at the close of the Middle Age, the world in which Faust is seeking the culture that shall lead him to the highest existence. In the first scene we are introduced to an imperial cabinet meeting at which the officials of the empire, among whom are prominent the fool and the astrologer, come together to give an account of their various stewardships. Mephistopheles (Faust does not appear in this scene) manages to intoxicate the fool, — who falls down just behind the emperor on the stair, — and directly takes his place, by the express command of the emperor, who takes special interest in his fool. The emperor opens the meeting with rather a bad grace, complaining that he has been called away from his amusements to take part in serious business, and that too at a time when, according to the astrologer, the stars portend luck and weal (Glück und Heil). He wonders why, when they are preparing for a masquerade, they should be called upon to torment themselves with serious deliberations; but what must be must be. They will go on.

The officials now in turn present their reports, each one more disheartening and alarming than another. When they have concluded the emperor appeals to the new fool, asking derisively if he has not some ugly state

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of things to report (some Not). Mephistopheles scouts the mere possibility of such a thing. With such an emperor and such a galaxy of wise, active, willing courtiers, how could any trouble or darkness exist? All the difficulty is due to a very simple and easily remedied defect — the want of money. That can easily be obtained from mountain veins of ore and old treasures buried under walls, if only a little of the nature and intellectual power of a gifted man be called in requisition. "Nature and intellect" — the very words fill the chancellor, who is also the archbishop, with holy horror. They are the very things that atheists are burnt for. "Nature is sin, intellect the devil, and the two are the parents of that hybrid product, doubt. No, no! the two supports of the imperial throne are the saints and the knights, who in consequence hold Church and State in fief." The new fool (according to the chancellor) represents democracy (Pöbelſinn), with its heretical, revolutionary, and corrupt tendencies. Mephistopheles, however, maintains his point, and calls in the aid of the astrologer, who, being his tool, instantly becomes his mouthpiece. But still the emperor is not convinced. Mephistopheles then, knowing how easily an uncritical, unobservant, half-hypnotized crowd can be fooled by suggestion, tells the audience that they can easily feel the presence of treasure in the ground below them by certain sensations in their limbs. All at once they feel sensations everywhere; and these being their own individual experiences must, of course, be true. Mephistopheles has conquered the crowd; but the emperor is still incredulous, and assures Mephistopheles that if he will point out where the treasures

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lie he will lay down sword and scepter and help to dig for them; and if it be found that he has lied, he will send him to hell. Mephistopheles quietly replies that he knows the way there, and then proceeds to give an eloquent description of the treasures buried in the emperor's land and, therefore, belonging to the emperor. The emperor gets impatient and demands that the digging shall begin at once; but now the astrologer comes to the rescue and persuades the emperor to wait till the carnival is over, when they will all be more collected and their sins atoned for:

Zerſtreutes Weſen führt uns nicht zum Ziel.
Erſt müſſen wir in Faſſung uns verſühnen.[1]

The emperor, who is eager only to get back to his amusements, is easily persuaded, and the session breaks up to prepare for the carnival. Mephistopheles, left alone, remarks:

Wie ſich Verdienſt und Glück verketten,
Das fällt den Toren niemals ein;
Wenn ſie den Stein der Weiſen hätten,
Der Weiſe mangelte dem Stein.[2]

The upshot of the whole scene is that we find the empire in a state of dissolution, being ruled by the counsels of Mephistopheles, the spirit of disintegration, whose aim in appearing in person is to introduce Faust at the imperial court.

[1] [A mind distraught conducts not to the goal.
First must we calmness win through self-control.]

[2] [That merit and success are linked together,
This to your fools occurreth never;
Could they appropriate the wise man's stone,
That, not the wise man, they would prize alone.]

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As in this scene we see the political powers at their serious business, so in the next scene we see them at their amusements — engaged in a carnivalesque masquerade. As everywhere, so here the true character of a people is revealed in its pastimes. This masquerade, like everything else in this second part, is worked out into a mass of details, which make a great spectacular impression but are utterly out of keeping with any true notions of art. The masquerade is managed by a herald, who plays the part of emperor (the emperor himself plays quite another part), and is altogether Italian in its character. We have seen that the movement presented in *Faust* consists of two parts, the German Reformation and the Italian Renaissance, and that Goethe tried to combine them. In this masquerade the Renaissance appears in full force, as a disintegrating agency. The scene opens with an almost endless number of pretty allegorical figures intended to represent the different elements of the Renaissance, with its classicism, its Arcadianism, its parasites and drunkards, and so on. The thing is dreadfully and wearisomely overdone. But at last come two groups which deserve our attention. The first is a sort of elephant, covered with gay carpets and moving along like a mountain. On its neck sits a pretty, delicate woman, guiding it with a rod. This is Shrewdness (Klugheit). On the back of the animal stands in lofty majesty and splendor Victory, dazzling to behold. By its side walk two chained women, Fear and Hope. Each gives an account of herself. As soon as they have done, up comes the ill-natured, ignorant critic — Zoilo-Thersites — and vents his spleen upon them. The herald

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strikes him; he turns into a loathsome clod, then into an egg, out of which come two obscene animals, an adder and a bat — the elements that enter into the crabbed critic.

It is easy enough to see what this scene represents, namely, the military civilization of the Middle Age, with its grotesque elephantism, its gay arrases, its chariot occupied by Victory, guided by Shrewdness, and accompanied by Fear and Hope in chains. It is entirely proper that the herald, who here plays the part of emperor, should strike the critic of this and show his obscene nature, — obscene, I mean, in the eyes of conservatives, for whose benefit he had been arrayed.

But now the whole crowd of masqueraders begin to feel that there is something uncanny in the air — something whizzing all about. The herald feels it and gives order that the door shall be carefully watched; but all in vain. There is a new influence and a new group coming in through the window. The herald, who has been able to explain everything else, must here confess his ignorance: this is not in his programme. It has, of course, been arranged by Mephistopheles, in order to introduce Faust at court. It is a splendid chariot drawn by four dragons. It moves along without parting the crowd, and the horses snort mightily as they advance. All the herald can say is Platz gemacht! Mich ſchaudert's! As the chariot approaches it is seen to be guided by a charming boy and to be occupied by two persons, one on a throne and another cowering behind it. The boy explains to the herald that they are all allegories, and that he ought to understand them; if not, he can at least describe them. This he does, as far, at least, as

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regards the boy and the personage on the throne (all of which is a very clumsy device). The boy is obviously embodied luxury; the king is external, material splendor; and the personage cowering behind him represents poverty, need, hunger. The boy explains that he himself is Poetry, or Wastefulness; the king is Plutus, the god of riches.

Derſelbe kommt in Prunk daher;
Der hohe Kaiſer wünſcht ihn ſehr.[1]

Der Abgemagerte is Avarice. Of course the king and the Emaciated (Abgemagerte) are masks for Faust and Mephistopheles. Faust is thus to be introduced at court as the bringer of wealth, which is obtained through avarice and is sure to be guided by luxury, or Verſchwendung. In fact, the whole group obviously represents the modern industrial civilization which gradually succeeded the military, feudal civilization of the Middle Age. It is introduced slyly by Mephistopheles in the right place, and is, of course, hostile to what the herald represents, namely, constituted authority. It is the power that is disintegrating the old military empire and making way for the modern economic state. The understanding between Plutus and Luxury is complete. The boy charioteer throws valuables among the crowd, — rings, combs, etc. The crowd eagerly seize upon them, indeed struggle for them; but each person finds that what he seizes turns into crawling insects in his hand. Political economists will have no difficulty in expounding this allegory. The wastefulness of luxury has often been supposed to

[1] [Hither he comes in royal state;
Of him the emperor's need is great.]

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give the poor an opportunity to become rich. To-day we know what such riches means.

In course of time the women in the crowd catch sight of Avarice (Mephistopheles) and begin to abuse him. He pays them out in their own coin. They now threaten to attack him and to tear to pieces the pasteboard chariot. The herald is about to interfere when, to the surprise of all, the dragons begin to unfold their wings and to belch forth fire. The crowd is scattered in a moment. Of course, wealth may be trusted to take care of itself. It insists upon the right to gather, hoard, and control property, and is ready with its fire-breathing dragons if that right is attacked.

The military civilization of the Middle Age was gradually replaced by an industrial guild system, which was practically an aristocracy riding in its chariot and defending itself with fire-breathing dragons. It was only by degrees that wealth began to penetrate among the lower classes, and when it did so things assumed a different aspect. This is what is represented by the descent of Plutus from his chariot. He descends, coffer and all, the coffer being lowered by the dragons. As soon as this is done Plutus dismisses Poetry, his charioteer, telling him that vulgar democracy is no place for him. He can thrive only where the beautiful and the good are popular. Poetry, recognizing himself as Wealth's nearest relative, takes his leave, to go for a time into solitude and build up his world, but adds:

So lebe wohl! Du gönnst mir ja mein Glück;
Doch lisple leis', und gleich bin ich zurück.[1]

[1] [Farewell! My bliss thou grudgest not to me;
But whisper low, and straight I 'm back with thee.]

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The need for poetry is no sooner felt than Poetry makes his appearance.

Plutus now touches his coffer with the rod of authority (the herald's rod); it opens and displays bronze kettles boiling up with golden blood in which are swimming crowns, chains, rings, etc., all on the point of being melted and swallowed up in the seething. This is simply the democratizing of wealth, which, in a sense, may be said to be coined blood. So the crowd understand it. They help themselves and expect to be rich in a moment; and finally a portion of them try to get possession of the coffer itself. Here, of course, is socialism trying to get hold of the sources of wealth. The socialistic movement of St. Simon was making considerable stir in those days, and attracted Goethe's attention.

The herald here again interferes, reminding the crowd that the whole thing is only a masquerade, and that mere counters are good enough for them. He calls upon Plutus to disperse the crowd. Plutus borrows the herald's rod of authority, dips it into the boiling caldrons inside the coffer, and begins to spirt the "boiling blood" among the crowd:

> Wer ſich zu nah' herangedrängt,
> Iſt unbarmherzig gleich verſengt —
> Jetzt fang' ich meinen Umgang an.[1]

The crowd, burnt in hands and face, is soon ignominiously driven back. Plutus, now completely master of the

[1] [And pressing round, who comes too nigh
Is forthwith scorched relentlessly! —
Now, then, my circuit is begun.]

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situation, and in order to remain so, demands the sanction of authority:

Doch ſolcher Ordnung Unterpfand
Zieh' ich ein unſichtbares Band.[1]

The meaning of all this seems clear enough. When wealth began to compete with aristocracy it was at first at a great disadvantage, from having no authority. Indeed aristocracy often made use of authority to rob it. But the wealthy classes were far too serviceable to authority to be left without protection against the poorer classes. And, indeed, it was these that, by seeking to appropriate the wealth of the rich, induced wealth and authority to make common cause, so that at last wealth comes to wield the rod of authority, and, as a pledge of good order, to surround itself with an invisible band. This is always so. Wealth will always acquire more and more authority in proportion as its rights are contested; otherwise the result will be ruin, as in the case of Athens. But though Plutus — we might almost say plutocracy — has now become armed with authority, he is able to tell authority that there will still be many a tumult before the new order of things can be established. Mephistopheles (Avarice) now kneads gold like dough, that is, he turns it to all sorts of uses, whereby it becomes dangerous to women and through their vanity corrupts society generally. Goethe saw clearly that the new social position necessarily accorded to women under the new industrial civilization was fraught with many dangers; that they were the chief agents in

[1] [Yet, pledge of order and of law,
A ring invisible I draw.]

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that demoralizing display which threatens to set one part of society against another:

> Denn immerfort ſind vornen an die Frauen,
> Wo's was zu gaffen, was zu naſchen gibt.[1]

Here we must clearly distinguish between Plutus, whose aims and purposes are good, and Avarice, which is always corrupting. Wealth tends naturally to open its treasures to all, Avarice to close them. At the same time Wealth will resent any attempt at communism and surround itself with a cordon of rights.

The herald, entirely favorable to Plutus, is now about to drive away Avarice, that is, by law to limit the accumulation of wealth, — a thing we frequently hear of in these days. Plutus tells him he need not put himself to the trouble:

> Er ahnet nicht, was uns von außen droht;
> Laß ihn die Narrenteidung treiben!
> Ihm wird kein Raum für ſeine Poſſen bleiben;
> Geſetz iſt mächtig, mächtiger iſt die Not.[2]

Avarice will stir up a reaction, due to need, which will cure it far sooner than any law can, — a fact which, it seems to me, is becoming plainer to us every day.

With this there comes upon the scene, with confusion and song, all the half-human creatures that ever were heard of, — fauns, satyrs, gnomes, nymphs, giants, — representing obviously the proletariat, that class which

[1] [For women ever foremost will be found,
If aught allure the palate or the eye.]

[2] [What threats us from without, he bodeth not,
Let him play out his pranks a little longer!
Room for his jests will fail him soon, I wot;
Strong as is law, necessity is stronger.]

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until recently was not treated as human, but merely as a means to the well-being of other classes. It is avarice, the massing of the world's wealth in a few hands, and the using of it for mere vulgar display, that calls these upon the stage of life. They owe nothing to authority, these wealth producers (for such they are); they cluster round and pay their allegiance to the Great Pan, to Nature, to the All of the world. Pan (who is represented by the emperor) comes along with a crowd of nymphs, who sing to him and describe the life of nature. Suddenly there comes to him a deputation of gnomes, who thus far have been employed as troglodytes in getting precious metals out of the mountains. They have now discovered a wonderful fount of treasure,

Die bequem verſpricht zu geben,
Was kaum zu erreichen war.[1]

This, of course, is Plutus' coffer, containing the sources of wealth, or, as we should now say, the instruments of production. They beg Pan to take that into his keeping:

Jeder Schatz in deinen Händen
Kommt der ganzen Welt zu gut.[2]

The meaning of this is only too plain. The wealth producers, that is, those who actually toil with their hands, propose that the instruments of production shall be taken possession of by the whole world, and employed for the benefit of everybody. This is, of course, what socialism and nationalism propose. It is interesting to see how

[1] [Promising in fullest measure,
What we scarce might hope to gain.]

[2] Every treasure in thy hands
Is to all the world a blessing.

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Plutus and the herald behave in the face of this. The former says to the latter:

Wir müſſen uns im hohen Sinne faſſen
Und, was geſchieht, getroſt geſchehen laſſen;
Du biſt ja ſonſt des ſtärkſten Mutes voll.
Nun wird ſich gleich ein Greulichſtes ereignen;
Hartnäckig wird es Welt und Nachwelt leugnen.
Du ſchreib' es treulich in dein Protokoll.[1]

Accordingly, the herald lays hold of the rod of authority, which, however, still remains in the hands of Plutus, and announces what happens (the whole thing extremely clumsy). The Great Pan, representing, we may say, the spirit of the populace, following the suggestion of the gnomes, goes up to look at this new source of wealth, which is now seething up from unfathomed abysses. He stoops over to look in, to see if he can comprehend it, and, in doing so, lets his false beard drop into the boiling caldron. It catches fire, flies up, sets fire to his crown, head, breast, in fact to his whole person, he being clad in resinous twigs. Not only is Pan set on fire, but the flames communicate themselves to the whole building and threaten to leave the palace a heap of ashes. The crowd tries to quench the flames, but all in vain. We have here, of course, a vivid description of what Goethe believed would happen if ever the populace were so much as to attempt the nationalizing of wealth. The result

[1] [Our self-possession now must be displayed,
And come what may, we must be undismayed;
Still hast thou shown a strong courageous soul.
A dreadful incident will soon betide;
'T will be by world and after-world denied;
Inscribe it truly in thy protocol!]

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would be a universal conflagration, which the masses would find it impossible to put out.

While all this has been going on, Plutus has been standing quietly in dignified expectancy for his opportunity. When he sees the crowd at their wit's end and utterly confounded at the result of their advice, he steps in with his authority:

Schrecken iſt genug verbreitet,
Hilfe ſei nun eingeleitet! —
Schlage, heil'gen Stabs Gewalt,
Daß der Boden bebt und ſchallt![1]

The fire is put out, and communism is at an end. The verses here remind us of Tennyson's lines in "Love thou thy land":

And if some dreadful need should rise
Would strike, and firmly, and one stroke.

Before we proceed further let us look back upon what has been accomplished. Faust has set out on a new career with a new aim, — to reach the highest existence; and he now thinks he can do this through the institutions of culture, at the head of which, as Aristotle saw, stands the state. Whereas in the previous portion of his life he had been practically aimless, content to get experience of any sort (provided it was violent enough) and allowing Mephistopheles to suggest to him and guide him, at present the whole aspect of matters is changed. Having now an aim he commands Mephistopheles, who more and more becomes his thrall. In order to obtain

[1] [Long enough hath terror swayed;
Hither now be help conveyed. —
Strike, thou hallowed staff, the ground,
Till earth tremble and resound!]

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this life of culture through the exertion of his highest energies, he has commanded Mephistopheles to introduce him at court and secure him a position of influence there. Of course, Faust means to do the very best he can to contribute in all ways to the upbuilding of the state. He is a good man and means to be a good public official. But he does not work himself into office by his own worth and inherent capacity, but by the low, vulgar arts of Mephistopheles, such as the corrupt politician uses. He floats into power on the wings of folly and superstition, and therefore is compelled to *hold* his power through the same forces. Thus his best efforts result only in mischief — at least for the time being. Mephistopheles manages to ingratiate himself as court fool, the most important official in an empire given over to masquerading and such folly. Once there, he corrupts the council of the empire by persuading the emperor and cabinet that the cure for all the ills which are disrupting state and society is money instead of moral effort. Of course, no suggestion could be more purely devilish, and it seems the devil is never tired of giving it. It is one that is sure to hasten the disintegration of man and society. But this is not enough for Mephistopheles; he not only persuades the court that the one thing needful is money (which is true, if the end of culture is enjoyment and self-indulgence), but he goes to work to disorganize things further by introducing bad, worthless money. The fallacy which he employs is that unproduced wealth is wealth; that what lies buried in the soil or under it in the form of productivity or metal may be treated by the state as if it were already realized, human

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labor being altogether discounted. Having caused officials, untrained in both logic and political economy, to swallow this fallacy, his next effort is to persuade the emperor of the existence of all this wealth in his lands, and therefore in his possession, and he calls in the aid of the astrologer, that is, of the charlatan scientist, for that purpose. But the emperor is still skeptical, and accordingly other means have to be employed to persuade him. At the carnival, at a masquerade intended to represent the empire as affected by the Renaissance, Mephistopheles introduces a group representing wealth, or rather the civilization founded upon wealth, and introduces Faust as Plutus, or Wealth, who comes with beneficent and lofty intent, comes, namely, to enrich in the true sense. Mephistopheles has further managed to make the emperor play Pan, that is, as we should now say, the *Zeitgeist*, the popular tendency, and has wrapped him in resinous twigs and given him a beard whose glue melts with heat. When Plutus, that is Faust, begins to place his source of wealth within the reach of all, Mephistopheles, personating avarice and its attendant corruption, stirs up a socialistic movement, which, by threatening to bring about utter confusion and the end of all culture, defeats his efforts and compels wealth to protect itself with the rod of authority and a cordon of law. (In this masquerade Goethe traces the effects of wealth on civilization down to our own times.) Authority even threatens to interfere by law with the accumulation of wealth; but such interference is unnecessary: the order of nature is sufficient to provide against that. That order comes in, attended by those beings who still live

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according to the natural law. The leader looks into the sources of wealth, with a view to taking possession, and the result is universal conflagration. It need not be mentioned that the satyrs and gnomes and the rest are in the service of Mephistopheles, as well as the class distinguished by avarice. But what has all this to do with making the emperor believe in Mephistopheles' fallacy? It turns out later that when Pan, that is, the emperor, looked down into the boiling caldron and was wrapped in flames, he had a vision of all the veins of gold and silver hid in the bowels of the earth, so that he himself felt like Pluto, or as a prince of a thousand salamanders, and on the strength of this vision had signed a check for unlimited drafts on this inexhaustible bank. But more of this in the next scene.

This is laid in a pleasure garden, where the court assembles. Faust and Mephistopheles are now decently dressed as courtiers. Faust kneels before the emperor and begs his pardon for the practical joke with the flames. (Evidently the emperor was not in the secret.) The emperor says he should be glad to have such experiences often repeated, and relates what he saw, — the veins of ore in the mountains and the glory of his own majesty. Mephistopheles improves the opportunity by flattering the emperor in the most fulsome way, thus lulling to sleep his fears with regard to his empire and himself in a most pernicious inactivity. The emperor expresses himself as extremely delighted with Mephistopheles, and promises him the highest of all honors. Thus the devil is at the head of affairs in the empire, and the devil is to pay, of course.

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The officials whom in the last act we saw presenting such disheartening accounts of their various departments now reappear and present reports of an entirely different sort. All now goes well: there is joy and prosperity everywhere. The land is overflowing with joy, and the emperor is being toasted as never in the world before. The emperor, amazed, inquires how it is all come about, and is told that on the previous night he himself, while playing the great Pan, had signed a paper of the following purport:

Zu wiſſen ſei es jedem, der 's begehrt:
Der Zettel hier iſt tauſend Kronen wert.
Ihm liegt geſichert, als gewiſſes Pfand,
Unzahl vergrabnen Guts im Kaiſerland.
Nun iſt geſorgt, damit der reiche Schatz,
Sogleich gehoben, diene zum Erſatz.[1]

The emperor feels the whole matter to be very uncanny and suspects crime at the bottom of it; but the officials assure him that he really signed the paper, that it has been indefinitely multiplied in the form of bank notes during the night, and that the universal happiness and prosperity are the result. The emperor, with slight misgivings, yields the point, and the currency of paper money is the law of the land.

Goethe has left it uncertain just how the emperor came to sign the original paper. As the latter has forgotten all about it, it must have been done while he was

[1] [To all whom it concerneth be it known:
Who owns this note a thousand crowns doth own.
To him assured, as certain pledge, there lies,
Beneath the Emperor's land, a boundless prize;
It is decreed, this wealth without delay
To raise, therewith the promised sum to pay.]

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under the influence either of drink or of glamour, and the poet has elsewhere shown us that on carnivalesque occasions there is no great distance between the two. Of course he must have signed it after his vision of the treasures hid in his land. Faust, now become a Utopian of the first water, descants upon the infinite amount of that treasure, ending with the delightful lines:

> Die Phantaſie, in ihrem höchſten Flug,
> Sie ſtrengt ſich an und tut ſich nie genug;
> Doch faſſen Geiſter, würdig, tief zu ſchauen,
> Zum Grenzenloſen grenzenlos Vertrauen,[1]

a well-deserved blow at unpractical politicians. Mephistopheles, on the other hand, is voluble in his praises of the convenience of paper money. The result is that the two are appointed custodians of the unproduced treasures, to perform their duties in concert with the chancellor, all digging to be done according to their directions:

> Vereint euch nun, ihr Meiſter unſres Schatzes,
> Erfüllt mit Luſt die Würden eures Platzes,
> Wo mit der obern ſich die Unterwelt,
> In Einigkeit beglückt, zuſammenſtellt.[2]

Faust goes off, now a great official, with the treasurer, and the emperor proceeds to make presents out of the

[1] [In loftiest flight, fancy still strives amain
To reach its limit, but still strives in vain —
Yet minds who dare behind the veil to press,
In the unbounded, boundless faith possess.]

[2] [Ally yourselves, ye masters of our treasure,
The honors of your place fulfill with pleasure,
There where together joined in blest content,
The upper with the under world is blent!]

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new wealth to his courtiers, among whom is the old fool, come back to occupy the place temporarily usurped by Mephistopheles. Inquiring into the use his courtiers are going to make of these presents, he finds reason to say:

> Ich hoffte Luſt und Mut zu neuen Taten;
> Doch wer euch kennt, der wird auch leicht erraten.
> Ich merk' es wohl, bei aller Schätze Flor,
> Wie ihr geweſen, bleibt ihr nach wie vor.[1]

How long Faust retains his high situation and how satisfactory he finds it we are not told. At all events there never comes the moment to which he can say, "Oh, stay; thou art so fair!" He is often called upon for services hard to render; indeed, the whole court and cabinet seem to depend upon him for everything. The next time we meet him is in a dark gallery of the palace, where he is trying to catch Mephistopheles, who is doing his best to avoid him, being nearly at his wit's end. The emperor, now rich and comfortable, wants continual amusement, and has now demanded that Paris and Helen, the model man and the model woman, shall be conjured up before him for his delectation. He evidently thinks the wizard Faust is equal to anything. Faust lays his difficulty before Mephistopheles and calls upon him to bring these worthies up from the underworld. Mephistopheles hesitates and declares that he has no concern with the heathen: they dwell in a hell

[1] [Courage I hoped, and joy, for new emprise—
But whoso knows you straight will recognize;
I mark it well, though wealth be multiplied,
Just what ye were, the same will ye abide!]

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of their own (a Swedenborgian trait). If the request had been for a witch or a dwarf, it would have been all right; but Paris and Helen! they are beyond his power. Faust declares that unless he can satisfy him on this point he will consider the pact broken, and orders him to speak out at once.

Mephistopheles is in great trouble. The truth is, Faust is demanding something from the ideal world, about which Mephistopheles knows nothing and against Faust's devotion to which he has from the first shown so much aversion. But he has no choice. Accordingly, with reluctance, he reveals höheres Geheimnis. Faust must go to certain timeless, placeless goddesses called the "mothers," and from them obtain the secret of bringing back the ideals of the past. Faust shudders at the very mention of these divinities. Still he must go, if only through them he can reach his end. He asks the way. "There is no way," says Mephistopheles; "all around them is vacancy, emptiness, waste." Faust thinks Mephistopheles is fooling him, and playing the mystagogue, as indeed he is; nevertheless,

> Nur immer zu! wir wollen es ergründen,
> In deinem Nichts hoff' ich das All zu finden.[1]

This last line may be said to be the turning point in the play. Faust is coming to see that satisfaction is to be found not in the world of things but in the world of energies and forms of activity — the highest and most important discovery, perhaps, that a man ever makes in

[1] [We 'll fathom it! Come on, nor look behind!
In this thy naught, the All I hope to find.]

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life. If he will only continue on this track, there is no doubt he will find "the All," which is what he is after, and be free from Mephistopheles, the spirit of partiality. Mephistopheles gives him a key which is to guide him through the waste to the "mothers." The key begins at once to gleam and lighten in his hand. Still he shudders at the word "mothers":

Was iſt das Wort, das ich nicht hören mag?[1]

Mephistopheles sneers at him for his cowardice:

Biſt du beſchränkt daß neues Wort dich ſtört?
Willſt du nur hören, was du ſchon gehört?
Dich ſtöre nichts, wie es auch weiter klinge,
Schon längſt gewohnt der wunderbarſten Dinge.[2]

Faust replies:

Doch im Erſtarren ſuch' ich nicht mein Heil,
Das Schaudern iſt der Menſchheit beſtes Teil;
Wie auch die Welt ihm das Gefühl verteure,
Ergriffen, fühlt er tief das Ungeheure.[3]

It is well known that Goethe behaved in a very mystical way in regard to this notion of the "mothers." It was one of those enigmas which, in his old age, he took delight in proposing to the world. Still I think there

[1] What is this word I dare not hear?

[2] [So narrow minded, scared by each new word!
Wilt only hear, thou hast already heard?
Inured to marvels, thee let naught astound;
Be not disturbed, how strange soe'er the sound!]

[3] [My weal I seek not in torpidity,
Humanity's best part in awe doth lie:
Howe'er the world the sentiment disown,
Once seized — we deeply feel the vast, the unknown.]

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can be no great difficulty nowadays in seeing what he meant. His thought, as he admits, is a combination of notions from Plutarch and Paracelsus. The truth is, the "mothers" are simply the Platonic ideas, regarded not as quiescent forms but as productive forces. The thought is a favorite one with Goethe and has far more important bearings than is generally understood. Mephistopheles continues:

Entfliehe dem Entſtandnen
In der Gebilde losgebundne Reiche!
Ergötze dich am längſt nicht mehr Vorhandnen;
Wie Wolkenzüge ſchlingt ſich das Getreibe.[1]

This is excellent Aristotelianism. All things exist in their causes, their energies: grasp these energies and you can recall any temporary formation in the past. The true realities are energies, dauernde Gedanken, as the Lord calls them in the prologue. The key is, of course, the energy which each human soul is — that which allies it to all the energies, even the most divine. Accordingly when Mephistopheles tells Faust,

Den Schlüſſel ſchwinge, halte ſie vom Leibe,[2]

the latter shouts in ecstasy:

Wohl! feſt ihn faſſend, fühl' ich neue Stärke,
Die Bruſt erweitert, hin zum großen Werke.[3]

[1] [Escaping from the real,
Seek thou the boundless realm of the ideal!
Delight thyself in forms long past away!
The train, like cloud-procession, glides along.]

[2] [Swing thou the key, hold off the shadowy throng!]

[3] [Good! Firmly grasping it, new strength is mine,
My breast expands! Now for the great design!]

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He is then told that the key will lead him to a glowing tripod, on seeing which he will know that he is at the deepest, deepest ground — at the very bottom of things. In the light of this he will behold the mothers, some sitting, some walking, some standing, wie's eben kommt.

Geſtaltung, Umgeſtaltung,
Des ewigen Sinnes ewige Unterhaltung.
Umſchwebt von Bildern aller Kreatur,
Sie ſehn dich nicht, denn Schemen ſehn ſie nur.
Da faß ein Herz, denn die Gefahr iſt groß,
Und gehe g'rad' auf jenen Dreifuß los,
Berühr' ihn mit dem Schlüſſel![1]

Here, of course, we have a description of the creative energy as it was conceived by many of the Greeks. The tripod which lights up the whole of these forms is, no doubt, the creative power itself, the Aristotelian *νοῦς ποιητικός*, which Aristotle himself conceives as a light, making potential colors actual. Faust is told to touch this tripod boldly with his key, and it will obediently follow him. In other words, he must bring that energy which is the essence of his own being into union with the supreme creative energy, and this will be his. He can then recall any hero or heroine of the

[1] [Formation, transformation,
Of mind etern eternal recreation!
While forms of being round them hover, thee
Behold they not, phantoms alone they see.
Take courage, for the danger is not slight,
Straight to the tripod press thou on, be brave,
And touch it with the key.—]

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ancient world he chooses, and will be the first who ever made such a bold attempt:

> Sie iſt getan, und du haſt es geleiſtet.
> Dann muß fortan, nach magiſchem Behandeln,
> Der Weihrauchsnebel ſich in Götter wandeln.[1]

Faust disappears with the key, and Mephistopheles remarks:

> Wenn ihm der Schlüſſel nur zum Beſten frommt!
> Neugierig bin ich, ob er wiederkommt.[2]

He knows so little about the ideal world that he is not sure Faust will ever come back. At all events, Faust has gone into the Greek ideal world to fetch up Helen, who, as we shall find, represents to Goethe the art of the classical world, which the Renaissance called back out of limbo.

While Faust is absent Mephistopheles amuses himself in the imperial drawing-rooms with the courtiers, who ask him for remedies for their various disorders. He keeps on prescribing for a while; but at last gets so impatient that he shouts, O Mütter, Mütter, laßt nur Fauſten los! and makes his way into the Ritterſaal, where preparations are making for the exhibition of Helen and Paris before the court, which has already assembled.

The scene opens with a rather awkward description by the herald, the astrologer, and Mephistopheles of what is going on. Mephistopheles is, of course, in the prompter's box. The theater, whose background is a Greek temple,

[1] ['T is done — with thee the bold achievement lies.
And then by spells, to sorcery allowed,
To gods shall be transformed the incense-cloud.]

[2] [In his behoof if worketh but the key!
Whether he will return, I 'm fain to see.]

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is Greek in every respect. In a short time Faust appears, robed as a priest, with his tripod in his hand, and rather pompously intones a speech beginning thus:

In eurem Namen, Mütter, die ihr thront
Im Grenzenloſen, ewig einſam wohnt,
Und doch geſellig! Euer Haupt umſchweben
Des Lebens Bilder, regſam, ohne Leben.
Was einmal war, in allem Glanz und Schein,
Es regt ſich dort; denn es will ewig ſein.[1]

When he ends his speech he touches the tripod with his key, which is glowing, and all at once the whole temple begins to make music, and out of a light mist comes a splendid youth — Paris. The women make various remarks about him, many of them of a pretty low order. Then Helen appears, and of course the men begin to talk. Mephistopheles does not take to her at all; the astrologer likes her; but as for Faust, he is completely overcome by her presence. A love scene, very similar to that described in the *Symposium* of Xenophon, now takes place between Paris and Helen. The ladies are both pleased and shocked; but when Paris undertakes to embrace Helen, poor Faust loses all patience, and forgetting his rôle as actor shouts out:

Verwegner Tor!
Du wagſt! Du hörſt nicht! halt! das iſt zu viel.[2]

[1] [In your name, Mothers, ye who on your throne
Dwell in the infinite, for aye alone,
Yet sociably! Around your heads are rife
Life's pictures, restless yet devoid of life;
What was, there moveth, bright with lustrous sheen;
For deathless will abide what once hath been.]

[2] [Rash fool! Beware!
Thou darest! Hearest not! Forbear, I say!]

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Mephistopheles, from the prompter's box, reminds him that it is all only a play. The astrologer baptizes the play *The Rape of Helen*, but Faust is beside himself with jealousy, and shouts out:

Was Raub! Bin ich für nichts an dieſer Stelle?
Iſt dieſer Schlüſſel nicht in meiner Hand?
Er führte mich durch Graus und Wog' und Welle
Der Einſamkeiten her zum feſten Stand.
Hier faſſ' ich Fuß! Hier ſind es Wirklichkeiten,
Von hier aus darf der Geiſt mit Geiſtern ſtreiten,
Das Doppelreich, das große, ſich bereiten.
So fern ſie war, wie kann ſie näher ſein!
Ich rette ſie, und ſie iſt doppelt mein.
Gewagt! Ihr Mütter, Mütter müßt's gewähren!
Wer ſie erkennt, der darf ſie nicht entbehren.[1]

In spite of the warnings of the astrologer Faust violently seizes Helen, who gradually grows dim and vanishes. He then touches Paris with the key, which he had been warned to keep away from bodies. An explosion takes place; the spirits vanish into mist, and Faust himself lies unconscious on the floor. In the darkness and confusion that follow, and in which the audience

[1] [The rape! Count I for nothing here? This key,
Do I not hold it still within my hand?
Through dreary wastes, through waves, it guided me,
Through solitudes, here to this solid land;
Here is firm footing, here the actual, where
Spirit with spirits to contend may dare,
And for itself a vast twin-realm prepare.
Far as she was, how can she be more near?
Saved, she is doubly mine! I 'll dare it! Hear,
Ye Mothers, Mothers, hear, and grant my quest!
Who once hath known, without her cannot rest!]

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disperses, Mephistopheles picks up the unconscious Faust and throws him over his shoulder with the remark:

> Da habt ihr's nun! Mit Narren ſich beladen,
> Das kommt zuletzt dem Teufel ſelbſt zu Schaden.[1]

And so this long act ends.

Let us ask what point Faust has now reached. At the beginning of the act we found him with a new ideal, — that of attaining the highest existence (Daſein), — which he supposes can be found in the culture given by institutions. He seeks it first in the state and attains a high position there, helping, however, to disintegrate it by supplying a false and cheap currency. The state, made temporarily prosperous, turns to luxury and begins to have a taste for art. Looking round for something to satisfy its desire, it lights upon Greek art, and tries to resuscitate it. It succeeds to some extent; in other words, it is subjected to the glamour of that art just as the south of Europe was at the Renaissance. Faust, the Renaissance man, undergoes this glamour in all its force. His imagination is inflamed, and in his attempts to realize that imagination he loses consciousness; in a word, he did what all the Renaissance men did, — he lost the mediæval moral consciousness and became a pagan, with a merely æsthetic consciousness. His great aim is now to realize this consciousness in the actual world, and his attempt to do this, with all that it involves, is the subject of the next two acts, which we may name "Faust's attempt to find satisfaction in Hellenism," that is, in science and art.

[1] [You have it now! With fools oneself to burden,
May to the Devil prove a sorry guerdon.]

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V

FAUST SEEKS SATISFACTION IN HELLENISM

There is a curious notion abroad that the poet is a sort of Æolian harp, which sounds only when the wind blows, or a sort of sailing ship, whose sails hang limp against the masts when they are not filled by a fresh breeze from heaven. The poet, in fact, is supposed not to have the source of his own activity within himself, and consequently not to act in accordance with any rational, reflective principle. The word of nature comes to him as the word of the Lord came to the old Hebrew prophets, and he speaks it out half unconsciously, not knowing what he says until it is said.

The poets themselves, particularly the second-class ones, have been largely to blame for this, in that they have often tried to surround themselves with a glamour of divinity and to act as if they were the mouthpieces of the Almighty. But the sober fact is that the true poets are the most self-conscious, the most keenly reflective of men, being in this respect superior even to the philosophers. Where, for example, is the philosopher of the Middle Age that, for reflective power, can even hold a candle to Dante? And who, in our own time, has fathomed all the depths of thought, and thridded all the labyrinths of the moral nature, with such exquisite subtlety as Tennyson? And what is true of these two

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great singers is equally true of Goethe. He is one of the most reflective, most self-conscious of men. Let us hear what Emerson says of him: "Of all men, he who has united in himself, and that in the most extraordinary degree, the tendencies of the era, is the German poet, naturalist, and philosopher, Goethe. Whatever the age inherited or invented he made his own. . . . Of dramatic power, the rarest talent in literature, he has very little. He has an eye constant to the fact of life, and that never pauses in its advance. But the great felicities, the miracles of poetry, he has never. It is all design with him, just thought and instructed expression, analogies, allusion, illustration, which knowledge and correct thinking supply; but of Shakespeare and the transcendent muse, no syllable." There is no part of Goethe's work to which these words apply with so much force as to the second part of *Faust*. Here everything is calculated. The poet sets out with an abstract thought, and tries consciously to break it up and define it by means of concrete, dramatic concepts, which not unfrequently sink to the level of mere allegories, or even lower than that. It is only too obvious that this part of his work is not originally thought in dramatic terms. The skeleton is abstract, and it is for this reason, perhaps, that it requires so much fantastic clothing to keep it out of sight, — that the form is out of all proportion to the content. The poet seems to have said: "See what a boundless and varied world of fancy I, in my old age, can gather round this bare, abstract concept." But he has not, for all that, produced a great work of art; indeed, there are some German æstheticists who deny that it is a work of art at all.

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Be this as it may, one thing is certain: it is not as a work of art that it chiefly claims our attention. Art, as art, is form; and certainly the form of the second part of *Faust* is about as far from the requirements of art as one could well imagine. I am, of course, here speaking of the form of the whole, and not forgetting that there are in it many passages, fragments, of great poetic value and beauty. But it is really the philosophic, abstract content that is the important thing here. We read the second part of *Faust* — those of us, at least, who are no longer in the pubescent stage of culture when jingles and genre pictures count as the highest art — because it reveals to us the thought of one of the greatest men of our epoch on the most solemn problems of life and death.

If it should be asked, Why did not Goethe, if he thus wished to play the philosopher, write his treatise in philosophic form? the answer is not difficult. Goethe, like every man who is more than a dry logic-mill, saw that those truths which go deepest, and on which life and death depend for their meaning, cannot be expressed otherwise than in symbols, or in the concrete images of art, — unless, indeed, they be expressed in life itself, as has been sometimes done with world-shaking success. It is well known that Goethe, like Carlyle, despised logic-chopping, and in this, indeed, he was right. Logic-chopping has, most assuredly, its value in the academic state of existence; but, as Goethe saw clearly, when it is taken as an expression or demonstration of the truth itself, it can only be a delusion and a snare, even when it calls itself by the prestige-haloed name of philosophy. Saving truth, life truth, can never at any time be expressed in the abstract

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concepts of philosophy; for these never are, and never can be, really true. It must find expression, if at all, either in symbols, or in poetic concrete images, or in the messianic treatment of life itself. In the first case we get a bold Jacob-Böhme mysticism, which may interest mystagogues and hierophantic philosophers, but which is, in the most literal sense, a dead letter as far as real life is concerned. In the second case we get that poetry, or to speak more universally, that art, which the world holds in eternal reverence and refuses to let die, — the art that lives with its own life. In the third case we get the great redemptive religions, — Mazdeism, Buddhism, Christianity, — at the bottom of which there is always a human life which, from its own stores, kindles a new life in humanity, — which life is the truth itself. The founder of the greatest of these redemptive religions well said, "I am the Way, and the Truth, and the Life."

Goethe, then, in the second part of *Faust*, has endeavored to express for us certain portions of the abstractly inexpressible truths of life in the concrete forms of art; and whether or no he has been successful, the attempt of so great and so largely cultured a man cannot be other than interesting to us.

We left Faust at the point where, having seen Helen and tried to obtain possession of her for his emotional nature, he loses his consciousness, that is, his mediæval consciousness, — one might almost say his Gothic consciousness, — without being able to attain a Greek consciousness. It is obvious enough that this transition corresponded to something in the poet's own life. He passed from Teutonism, which was essentially mediæval,

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to Hellenism through a brief period of dreamy ecstasy, such as he makes part of Faust's experience; for it must be observed that Faust dreams all through his fainting fit.

Faust has demanded Helen, not the mere mask of Helen which, with the aid of the creative reason (*νοῦς ποιητικός*), one can always conjure up from Hades for stage purposes, but the real Helen; or, to speak without metaphor, he demands from Mephistopheles that he shall be enabled to see the world as those saw it who found Helen in it; in other words, with Greek eyes, or through the medium of the Greek consciousness. And it is to satisfy this demand that Mephistopheles has now to summon up all his wits. Being himself a Germanic devil, the product of mediæval syncretisms; being, in fact, merely the subjective side of that consciousness which Faust has temporarily lost, — it is obvious enough that he cannot directly find Helen for him, cannot directly initiate him into the Greek consciousness. He must somehow find a "cousin," who shall be the subjective side of the consciousness into which Faust endeavors to enter, — a cousin who will disappear at the right time and leave Mephistopheles to deal with his victim.

Accordingly he carries Faust back to his old Gothic study from which he had carried him away, and throws him unconscious upon his old bed. He then introduces himself to Wagner, the true representative of the academic spirit, who has taken Faust's place in his absence and is now world famous for his learning. But before he does so he receives a visit from our old acquaintance, the callow student of the first part, who, having profited well by his lessons, has in a few years

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become a confirmed Fichtean solipsist, reeling off Fichtean phrases with all the deftness of a confirmed votary, showing us the effects, all the boyish arrogance, of absolute individualism in the sphere of philosophy. This little scene is known to have been written long before the publication of the first part as a whole, and therefore belongs to the best period of the poet's life. This is, indeed, sufficiently obvious from the *verve* and keen humor that run through it. Having dismissed the impertinent young puppy — for such he is — with a good-natured Mephistophelian grin, Mephistopheles makes his way to Wagner's study, which has now become a laboratory, in which he is toiling with all his might and with nervous, expectant enthusiasm to make a man by chemical, or rather alchemical, means. Here again, of course, we have one of the disintegrating effects of individualism. Men are now no longer to be born and therefore from the first to be members of an institution, — the family; they are to be produced independently, from chemical elements, and therefore, of course, will own no relations to society. Mephistopheles sees his opportunity both to confirm the academic Wagner in his materialistic faith that men are the result of the chemistry of their body, and also to get a half-embodied Greek devil to play the subjective part of the consciousness which Faust desires to attain. Of course the Greek principle of evil, the Greek subjectivity, is pretty much a thing of the past, and can embody itself only in the alembics of academic laboratories, and then only in a glass bottle; but so far, at least, Mephistopheles can find an embodiment for it. Accordingly, he summons it up and embodies it in the

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elements in Wagner's glass crucible. No sooner is it embodied, as *Homunculus*, than it begins to talk, first to Wagner, whom it addresses as "fatherkin," and then to Mephistopheles, whom it recognizes as "rogue and cousin." To the former it says:

> Natürlichem genügt das Weltall kaum;
> Was künstlich ist, verlangt geschloßnen Raum.[1]

It informs the latter that while it *is* (it evidently has periods of not-being) it must be busy, and recognizes that Mephistopheles, to whom it owes its partial embodiment, is just the person to shorten its task for it. Its task is, of course, to get full embodiment, to entstehen, as it afterwards says. Wagner attempts some learned metaphysical talk; but is waved off by Mephistopheles with a cynical remark, and the reminder that here there is something to do. "What?" asks Homunculus. Mephistopheles at once throws open the door of Faust's chamber, and he is seen lying unconscious on a couch. Homunculus' bottle at once slips out of Wagner's hands, hovers over Faust, and illuminates (beleuchtet) him. In his own light Homunculus at once sees Faust's dream. It consists of what used to pass for characteristically Greek in the days when Italian and other artists painted pictures of nymphs bathing. At last he sees the lieblichste von allen Szenen, Leda and the swan. We can easily see from this that the Greek subjectivity, which through Homunculus' light becomes visible in Faust, is just that æsthetic sensuality which was one of the chief causes of the disintegration

[1] [The All
Scarcely suffices for the natural;
The artificial needs a bounded space.]

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of Greek life. It is exactly what we find described in Xenophon's *Symposium* and assumed in the later lyric and pastoral poetry. In a brief conversation which follows, the difference between Homunculus and Mephistopheles comes clearly out, — that is, the difference between the Greek and the German disorganizing spirit.

Homunculus has been called up to restore Faust to consciousness, or rather to wake him into the Hellenic, objective consciousness. The pure subjectivity which Faust already possesses is a mere dream. Homunculus proposes that Faust be carried to the Classical Walpurgis night, in the broad valley of the Peneios, there to make the acquaintance of all lower influences of ancient civilization. Mephistopheles rebels against such a proposal, and thinks that some piece of deviltry from the Brocken might be tried first; but he finds "heathen bolts" (Heidenriegel) in the way. "The Greeks were never of much account. Yet they dazzle you with free play of the senses, entice the human breast [mark the word] to joyous sins. Ours will always be found gloomy." But on hearing of Thessalian witches Mephistopheles is induced to follow Homunculus, who, of course, with his bottle light undertakes to guide. Poor Wagner is left disconsolate to unfold his old parchments. In all this the academic man has no part. Mephistopheles quite likes his cousin, who is now guiding him.

Herr Vetter iſt nicht zu verachten.
Am Ende hängen wir doch ab
Von Kreaturen, die wir machten.[1]

[1] [We must not slight our cousin's aid.
At last in sooth, we all depend
On creatures we ourselves have made.]

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In the next scene we find ourselves on the plain of Pharsalia, which the old witch Erichtho describes for us. As soon as Faust touches Hellenic soil (and it is only half Hellenic!) he gains consciousness, and his first words are Wo iſt ſie? Homunculus cannot tell him that, but tells him to go round among the watch fires and inquire. The three now agree to separate, each going about his own business; Mephistopheles to make acquaintance with the Hellenic world in order the better to disintegrate modern Hellenized men, Homunculus to find an opportunity of coming into existence (entſtehen), and Faust to find Helen, that is, objective Greek consciousness. Mephistopheles remains among all the grotesque creatures of the Hellenic world—ants, sphinxes, sirens, griffins—and, though he recognizes their affinity with himself, he does not at all like them, being particularly shocked at their nudity, as people like him are wont to be. Faust even puts a question to the sphinxes about Helen, but receives the answer that she is later than they, and that he had better ask the centaur Chiron, who forms the link between the world of the natural and that of the moral man. He has carried Helen on his back.

Accordingly Faust wanders away along the banks of the Peneios, where he hears the river god sing among his reeds and meets nymphs who counsel him to rest while they sing to him. But he is in no humor for resting. He sees the same scene which he had seen in his dream in the north,—the same sensuous dream, now real and abiding. But as yet he sees no Helen. While he is looking at the bathing nymphs one of them puts her ear to the ground and hears the tramp of horse's

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hoofs. In a moment Chiron comes up and, being unable to stop, takes Faust on his back and goes cantering away in the direction of Olympus. After some interesting conversation Faust asks about Helen. Chiron knows all about her and her love affairs; has carried her on his back. Faust is beside himself, declaring, Ich lebe nicht, kann ich sie nicht erlangen. Chiron considers him crazy, and proposes to take him to Manto, the daughter of Asklepios, to be cured. Cured! Faust is indignant — the very last thing he wants to be! With this they arrive at the temple of Apollo, at the foot of Olympus, to find Manto asleep. They wake her. She welcomes Faust, declaring, Den lieb' ich, der Unmögliches begehrt. Chiron canters off. Faust remains with Manto, who promises to introduce him to Persephone and let him beg for Helen, as Orpheus had done for Eurydice. Here there is a very disturbing and very lamentable lacuna in the play. Goethe meant to write a very touching scene, in which Faust should present his petition for Helen to Persephone so touchingly that she herself, moved to tears, should grant it, and so he should come into possession of Helen. That scene was never written, and so Faust's ride upon Chiron's back and his visit to Manto are entirely aimless, a mere piece of spectacular obstruction. He obtains Helen in an entirely different way. So little of an art unity is this second part of *Faust*.

The remainder of this Classical Walpurgis night is devoted to the fortunes, or misfortunes, of Mephistopheles and Homunculus, and indeed has hardly any more connection with the action of the play than has the

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"Walpurgis Night's Dream" in the first part. I say "hardly," because two small points are gained. At first, in the upper Peneios, we come upon Mephistopheles among sirens, Earthquake, sphinxes, griffins, ants, pygmies, dactyli, lamias, the cranes of Ibycus, etc. He is very uncomfortable, and not at all at home. What annoys him most is that in this Greek world everything keeps changing, developing. Nothing remains stationary as in his fossilized northern world. Finally, what with empusas and oreads, he entirely loses his way among unknown rocks and mountains. He is at last relieved from his difficulty by the appearance of Cousin Homunculus' light. He asks the way in this too foreign Greek world. Homunculus tells him he is moving about from place to place trying to get into the best sort of existence (Ich möchte gern im beſten Sinn entſtehen), but so far he has seen no medium for that purpose in the smallest degree tempting. But he has just been following two philosophers whom he has heard talking about "nature, nature!" and he is resolved to keep close to them because

> Sie müſſen doch das irdiſche Weſen kennen;
> Und ich erfahre wohl am Ende,
> Wohin ich mich am allerklügſten wende.[1]

Mephistopheles tells him he had better do it on his own account:

> Wenn du nicht irrſt, kommſt du nicht zu Verſtand.
> Willſt du entſtehn, entſteh auf eigne Hand.[2]

[1] [Somewhat of earthly being they must know,
And doubtless I at last shall learn
Whither most wisely I myself may turn.]

[2] [Unless thou errest, reason dormant lies;
Wilt thou exist, through thine own effort rise!]

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Nevertheless, Homunculus follows the philosophers, who are none other than Thales and Anaxagoras, the former representing the physical, evolutional explanation of the universe, the latter the metaphysical, creative, miraculous explanation; we might say they represent respectively Darwin and Hegel. They carry on a conversation which hardly concerns us, and from which, at any rate, Homunculus does not obtain the information he desires. The two soon go off

zum heitern Meeresfeste!
Dort hofft und ehrt man Wundergäste.[1]

Mephistopheles now reappears, and comes upon the Phorkyads, who represent what in the Greek world corresponds to sin, namely the base or ugly (*τὸ κακόν*, *τὸ αἰσχρόν*). And this demands our attention for a moment.

We have seen that Faust, on entering the Hellenic world, is in a world in which Mephistopheles, that is, sin, has almost no meaning. The Greek language does not even possess a word for sin, a word corresponding to the Hebrew חַטָּאת. The Greek might err (*ἁμαρτεῖν*), that is, he might miss a mark; but he knew nothing of that disloyalty to an infinitely holy personality which forms the notion of sin in Judaism and Christianity, and which ultimately led, and must always lead, to the conviction that man has his being in God. By getting into the Hellenic world Faust has got away from the possibility of damnation in the Christian sense, but he has also got away from the possibility of salvation in that sense. As Mephistopheles says, das Heidenvolk — Es

[1] [To the sea's glad feast repair!
Strange guests are honored and expected there.]

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hauſt in ſeiner eignen Hölle. If Faust, however, could be satisfied with the Greek consciousness, Mephistopheles would gain his bet; for he helps him to it. But there is another important point to be noticed. While Mephistopheles remains Mephistopheles to the last, the eternal negation, deepening as time goes on, Homunculus, who, though a cousin of Mephistopheles, is only the negation of beauty, passes in time into the corresponding affirmation. Mephistopheles never becomes one of the sons of God: Homunculus does embody himself as soon as he sees true beauty and falls in love with it. In permitting this Goethe was only expressing the truth that everything is beautiful as soon as it is seen in its universal relations; whereas anything seen apart from these relations may be ugly.

But to return to Mephistopheles and the Phorkyads. Though at first horrified by the one-eyed, one-toothed trinity of ugliness, Mephistopheles makes up to them, flatters them, gets into their good graces, persuades one of them to lend him her form, and goes off to hide himself in order to scare the devils in hell.

Vor aller Augen muß ich mich verſtecken,
Im Höllenpfuhl die Teufel zu erſchrecken.[1]

Mephistopheles has now become thoroughly Hellenized, without, however, losing his northern character. He thus at once becomes more degraded and better able to tempt men who have taken a Greek culture.

The next scene, in which Homunculus gets embodied, carries us to the rocky bays on the shores of the Ægean

[1] [Now must I shroud myself from mortal sight,
In pool of hell the devils to affright.]

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Sea, where our companions are sirens, tritons, nereids. This scene is very long and very tedious. Nereus and Proteus are both interested in Homunculus, who is informed that in order to *become* (entſtehen) he must begin as protoplasm in the bottom of the sea, and go through all the long process through which man has passed in his evolution from the moneron. Goethe brings in here the whole evolution theory, which had to wait for Darwin in order to become popular, but of which he himself was one of the most earnest apostles. Homunculus' Entſtehung happens in this way: the old man of the sea asks him to be present at a visit which he is about to receive from his numerous daughters, the nereids, dorids, etc., whom he has specially invited. They are to come in a great sea procession, on water dragons and Neptune's horses, headed by the fairest of them all, Galatea, who is now worshiped in Paphos, instead of Venus, and who will come in Venus' shell chariot. Nereus is overcome with fatherly joy, thinking of all his glorious offspring. He cannot harbor ill will to any one, not even to men, with all their willfulness and crass stupidity. He accordingly sends Homunculus to the wonderman, Proteus, who knows all about transformations, and may be induced to tell him how to become. Proteus is at first very shy and noncommittal; but at last his curiosity is too much for him, and, after discovering that Homunculus is a real Jungfernſohn and that he is of no sex, he tells him how he may become: "In the broad sea thou must begin. There you begin on a small scale, and take pleasure in swallowing minutest things. So you grow up by slow degrees, and build

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yourself up for higher perfection." Thales advises Homunculus to do as Proteus bids him:

Gieb nach dem löblichen Verlangen,
Von vorn die Schöpfung anzufangen!
Zu raschem Wirken sei bereit!
Da regst du dich nach ewigen Normen,
Durch tausend, abertausend Formen,
Und bis zum Menschen hast du Zeit.[1]

Proteus advises him not to aspire to the higher orders; for if he is once a man it is all over with him. In course of time Galatea's shell chariot appears, gleaming like a star upon the far waves. Homunculus is completely overcome with the beauty of the whole scene, and at last, when the chariot of Galatea appears, he dashes his bottle against it, escapes from his geschloßnen Raum, and mingles with the infinite world, with universal nature, there to be developed according to her eternal laws. Nereus sings:

Bald lobert es mächtig, bald lieblich, bald süße,
Als wär' es von Pulsen der Liebe gerührt.[2]

The sirens and all the other sea deities praise in the most musical of verses the great event (Heil dem seltnen Abenteuer).

Let us now look back for a moment and see what has been accomplished in this long, overwrought, and

[1] [Obey the noble inspiration,
And at its source begin creation,
Make ready for the great emprise!
By laws eternal still ascending,
Through myriad forms of being wending,
To be a man in time thou 'lt rise.]

[2] [Now strongly it glitters, now sweetly, now mild,
As if by the pulses of love it were swayed!]

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most complicated scene. The purpose of the whole, let us remember, was to restore Faust to consciousness, — to a Hellenic consciousness. For this purpose Mephistopheles had to call in the aid of Homunculus, a Greek spirit no longer in existence and therefore no longer embodied. Such a spirit can exist only in an unnatural, limited way in the crucible of an academic pedant. As to existing, however, he can see the subjective consciousness of Faust and tell Mephistopheles that this can become objective, that is real, only by Faust's being carried to Greece, and made acquainted, as far as possible, with the Hellenic world. Accordingly all three proceed to Greece, and visit the scene of the old popular consciousness on the field of Pharsalia and the banks of the Peneios. There Faust, recovering his consciousness, proceeds to find Helen, and ends at the foot of Olympus, in the cave of Manto, who promises to introduce him to Persephone so that he may beg Helen of her. Mephistopheles ends by assuming the mask of Phorkyas, the embodiment of ugliness, and thus being prepared to deal with the Hellenized Faust. Homunculus ends by beginning his development as a real personality, which he does by dashing his limitations to pieces against the chariot of physical beauty and mingling with the forces of nature.

When Goethe wrote this scene he, no doubt, expected and intended to use all these three situations for further developments. He probably intended that Faust should make a touching appeal to Persephone for Helen and obtain her, and that Mephistopheles should destroy Faust's enjoyment of Helen's beauty by some carnal ugliness, just as he had destroyed his enjoyment of

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Margaret by the results he brought about. What part the beauty-intoxicated Homunculus was intended to play is not quite clear, but probably that of Paris, who would then again have won Helen away from Faust by means of a sensual passion, as in the old time he had, under the influence of Venus, won her away from her lawful husband Menelaus.

But not one of all these plans is carried out. Faust never visits Persephone; Mephistopheles gains nothing by assuming the mask of Phorkyas that he could not have readily accomplished without it; Homunculus does not appear again at all. How is all this to be explained? By the simple fact that Goethe had the habit of working out the different parts of his work separately and independently of each other, just as the mood struck him, and then trying to fit them together as best he could. We have seen that this was the case with the second scene in which the callow student appears. The same thing is true of the third act. The best editor of Faust says, „Der dritte Akt gehört zu den älteſten Teilen der Dichtung." It had assumed its present form in 1827, and had at that time, unfortunately, been published, so that it could hardly be altered. (Carlyle wrote an essay on it in his days of blind enthusiasm for things German, without having seen the rest of the second part.) When this act was written Goethe had evidently another notion of the course of the second part than the one which he ultimately worked out. When, therefore, the third act came to be inserted in the poem as a whole, it would not fit in. It remained a mere interlude and, as it was called, a phantasmagoria. In itself it is, of course,

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not without great merit of a certain fantastic kind; but regarded as a part of *Faust* it must be pronounced a distinct failure. We must now consider it.

The *Helena* is in form a Greek tragedy, written in Greek meters and having a chorus. It is complete in itself, and was perhaps not originally meant to form part of *Faust* at all. When Helen was replaced by Gretchen in the plan of the first part Goethe seems to have resolved to work out a Greek tragedy having Helen and Faust for its subject. When he resolved to write the second part he inserted it in that, with what results we have seen.

The act, or play, opens in front of the palace of Menelaus of Sparta. In the dreadfully inartistic Euripidean prologue, Helen reports that she has just come from the sea, having been brought back from Troy by her husband, and is still somewhat dizzy from the long voyage. Menelaus, who has behaved coldly to her during the voyage, has remained at the port with his warriors and sent her on with her attendants to take possession of the palace, with its treasures, and make preparation for a sacrifice, the victim for which, however, he has not named. Helen is uneasy, not knowing in what capacity she has come, whether as wife or as victim. However, she enters the palace to take possession, leaving the attendant chorus, composed of captive Trojan women, outside. In a few moments she returns horror-stricken, but soon becomes collected enough to tell the anxious chorus the cause. On entering the palace she has found no human being to welcome her; but on entering the great hall she has found sitting by the hearth a female horror, which at first took no notice of her, but on being

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addressed waved her off, and, when she approached the sleeping apartment and the treasure chamber, barred her way and forced her to retreat. At these words the monster, none other than Mephistopheles-Phorkyas, who has taken the place of the housekeeper, appears on the threshold, and the chorus are horrified. They speak of Phorkyas in very uncomplimentary terms, and imprecate curses on her. She pays them back in kind, whereupon Helen interferes and discloses herself. Phorkyas at once yields to her, but has still a squabble with the chorus. Helen puts a stop to this, and enters into a conversation with Phorkyas regarding her own past. In this it appears that Helen has always led a sort of double existence, and is not sure now whether she be herself or her phantom double. In her doubt she faints:

Ich ſchwinde hin, und werde ſelbſt mir ein Idol.[1]

The chorus rail against Phorkyas, who, however, soon calls Helen back to consciousness. The latter now orders preparation to be made for the sacrifice. Phorkyas replies that everything is ready but the victim. As Menelaus has not mentioned the victim, Phorkyas has no difficulty in persuading Helen that she herself has to play that part. The chorus are horrified, Helen only pained. The chorus now begin to flatter Phorkyas, and ask her to help them; Helen is willing to be helped.

Phorkyas, accordingly, relates how, during Menelaus' absence at Troy, a horde of northern barbarians has invaded the country, conquered part of it, and built

[1] [I faint and to myself a phantom I become.]

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themselves a castle in the mountains to the north of Sparta. She describes in glowing terms this castle, its inhabitants, and particularly its chief. The chorus is eager to be carried thither and Helen consents to go. Suddenly, as Menelaus' host is heard and seen approaching, a mist arises, inclosing Helen and her attendants, who shortly after find themselves within the barbarian fortress, and Phorkyas nowhere to be seen.

Mephistopheles has procured Helen for Faust. The woman of 1500 years before Christ is brought into the presence of the man of 1500 years after. While Helen and her attendants stand wondering what is going to happen, the castle suddenly becomes alive with handsome, rosy-cheeked young Germans, making rapid preparation for Helen's reception, her arrival having evidently been announced by Mephistopheles. In a few moments Faust himself comes on the scene, and by his appearance throws the chorus into rapture. He brings with him the tower watcher, Lynceus, who has been so remiss in his duty as to allow Helen to enter the castle unannounced, and who is to suffer any punishment Helen may name. The poor fellow falls down in admiration before her, and Helen most graciously forgives him. By this time Faust is in an ecstasy of delight. He and all that he possesses are hers. A love scene between Faust and Helen now takes place, which is interrupted by Phorkyas rushing in with the news that Menelaus and his host are at the gates. Faust remains undisturbed, knowing that his warriors are equal to the occasion. And so it proves: Menelaus is defeated and forced to retreat to the sea. The whole Peloponnesus now

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becomes Faust's rightful property through Helen, and is distributed in fiefs to his generals.

As they have no longer any need of walls to protect them, Faust, now prosperous in every worldly sense, proposes that Helen and he should adjourn to Arcadia:

Arkadiſch frei ſei unſer Glück!

The scene accordingly changes to Arcadia, to a wooded plateau surrounded by steep rocks full of caves which are entered through arbors. A considerable number of years must now be supposed to elapse, during which Faust lives with Helen, as Odysseus did with Kalypso, in Arcadian blessedness; with no other attendant than Phorkyas, the chorus sleeping the while. Their food is nuts, their bed moss, their clothes bark, all gathered and prepared by the cunning Phorkyas. Helen has given birth to a wonderful boy, Euphorion, the delight of his parents, a genius without wings, faunlike without animality, a creature of the most enthusiastic and venturesome disposition. Naked at first, he enters a cleft in the rock and emerges in the most wonderful attire, with a golden lyre in his hand and an aureole about his head. His music charms the chorus (which now wakes up), Faust, Helen, and even Mephistopheles, which shows that it contains a diabolic element. But his venturesomeness leads him to climb the giddiest heights and, in spite of all the warnings of his fond parents to keep on the ground, he is determined to climb. Arcadian simplicity and happiness are not for a youth like him. Like his father in the first part of the poem, he demands action, passion, sensation, struggle, war. Mistaking his flowing robes for wings, he flings himself, despite the monitions

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of his parents and the prayers of the chorus, from the highest peak into the air. In a moment he falls dead at his parents' feet; whereupon his body vanishes, his aureole rises to heaven as a comet, and only his clothes and lyre are left. Helen and Faust are inconsolable. A voice is heard from the deeps calling upon Helen to follow her son:

Laß mich im düſtern Reich,
Mutter, mich nicht allein![1]

The chorus respond with the exquisite song which Goethe acknowledged to have been meant as a dirge for Byron. Helen obeys the summons. With the words,

Zerriſſen iſt des Lebens wie der Liebe Band;
Bejammernd beide, ſag' ich ſchmerzlich Lebewohl!
Und werfe mich noch einmal in die Arme dir.
Perſephoneia, nimm den Knaben auf und mich![2]

she vanishes, leaving her robe and veil in Faust's arms. Phorkyas bids him hold them fast, adding:

Es trägt dich über alles Gemeine raſch
Am Aether hin, ſo lange du dauern kannſt.
Wir ſehn uns wieder, weit, gar weit von hier.[3]

As she gives this insidious advice to Faust, Helen's garments dissolve into clouds, surround him, and carry him off, while Phorkyas gathers up the *exuviæ* of Euphorion, with the remark that she has a find which,

[1] [Leave me in realms forlorn,
Mother, not all alone!]

[2] [Rent is the bond of life, with it the bond of love;
Lamenting both, I say a sorrowful farewell,
And throw myself once more, once only, in thine arms,—
Persephoneia, take the boy, take also me!]

[3] [Thee o'er all common things 't will swiftly bear,
Through ether, long as there thou canst abide.
We meet again, far, far away from here.]

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though the fire has gone out of it, is still sufficient to initiate poets and to excite the envy of guilds and crafts, adding:

Und kann ich die Talente nicht verleihen,
Verborg' ich wenigstens das Kleid.[1]

The chorus now divides into four parts, and, instead of returning to Hades, resolves to remain on the earth. One part, therefore, becomes dryads, another oreads, another naiads, and the fourth bacchanals, or wine nymphs. Phorkyas, who all the time has been sitting by a column, lays aside mask and veil and appears in his own form as Mephistopheles. So the act ends.

With regard to this phantasmagoria Goethe in 1827 said: "What comforts me is that culture in Germany has now risen to an incredible height, and one has no need to fear that such a production will long remain incomprehensible or without effect." Let us try to comprehend it.

In the first place, in the *Helena* the allegorical element entirely dominates, and thus makes it a work of a very inferior order. Faust, Helena, and the rest are lifeless types — schemes — having nothing to do with time or space. They belong in the world of the "mothers." Faust stands for the grand old free spirit of Germany, which has just been rejuvenated by following its natural desires and tendencies, and casting off the foreign masks and fetters imposed upon it by a crystallized political and religious system. It is vigorous and full of hopes and demands, with boundless latent capabilities, but grotesque

[1] [And am I powerless genius to bestow,
Its vesture I can lend, at any rate.]

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from long unnatural repression, rash, skeptical, ebullient, and unrefined. Its essence is free activity and conquest of the *real* world, wherein it embodies itself as action. It is masculine. Helen is the spirit of Greek civilization, eternally young and beautiful, eternally wooed, waiting in the Hades of the "mothers" to be called up to marry any heroic Achilles or Faust who may be bold enough to demand the impossible. Its essence is freedom of thought and imagination, — conquest of the *ideal* world wherein truth embodies itself as beauty and grace. It is essentially feminine. The marriage of Faust and Helen, brought about by Mephistopheles, is, of course, the union of German will force with Greek thought and art. Let us observe that neither in Faust nor in Helen is there any moral element. Let us also observe that Faust goes to Greece, not Helen to Germany. In truth, Helen completely conquers Faust, paralyzes his activity, and induces him to lead a selfish, Arcadian life among romantic rocks and forests, — a life of culture! The offspring of the two is Euphorion, a wonderful, dashing, reckless, inspired genius, inheriting the will force of his father and the art of his mother, but absolutely no moral sense, — a genius best typified, Göethe thought, by Byron. Euphorion is the German Renaissance, which, as we all know, ended in romanticism, made up, as Brandes says, of passion and anarchism (Leidenſchaft und Freigeiſterei). Such a being must necessarily, in a short time, destroy itself through immoral recklessness. When Euphorion dies Helen, between whom and Faust he had come to be the sole bond, must follow him to the gloomy realm. That is,

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with the death of romanticism the Hellenic art ideal must also depart, so far, at least, as matter is concerned. But Euphorion and Helen both leave their robes behind them. Mephistopheles picks up Euphorion's to lend to the future superficial, satanic, and fleshly schools of France and England. Helen's robe resolves itself into a cloud, which envelops Faust and carries him back to his native Germany. Helen's attendants mingle with nature, imparting to it a new life. In other words, the form or clothing of romantic art is satanic; it belongs among the negative or disorganizing forces. The pure Greek art form, on the contrary, when it has dropped its Greek content, carries us aloft and back to nature, enabling us to see therein new living forces of human semblance. This was Goethe's literary creed in the end. The German never can become, and never ought to become, a Greek; but he can gain infinitely by rising to the Greek artistic point of view and seeing nature with the eyes of a Greek.

How long Faust might have remained with Helen, if Helen had remained with him, there is no telling. Certain it is that Faust did not find in her that complete satisfaction which could tempt him to say to the passing moment, "Oh, stay; thou art so fair!" The great need of Faust's German nature was activity, and of that his passion for Helen deprived him. Grand and noble as Greek art and culture are, any overdevotion to them has always ended in quenching activity and led to aimless speculation and luxury. As Horace said of his own country:

> Captive Greece took captive her rude conqueror.

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VI

THE REDEMPTION OF FAUST

In the fourth act of the play we find Faust back in Germany. The cloud into which Helen's robe had resolved itself deposits him on a lofty pinnacle in the midst of towering mountains. Being still under Greek influence, he pronounces a monologue in iambic trimeters, in which he describes the forms and motions of the departing cloud. It loosens itself from him slowly without evaporating; it moves eastward in a solid mass; it divides up into waving, changeful forms. On sunlit pillows lies outstretched a magnificent, gigantic female form, like Juno, Leda, or Helen. Then all becomes formless again, towering up with majestic restfulness in the far east, mirroring in dazzling splendor the great all-embracing meaning of the days that pass. But Faust's breast and brow are still enveloped in a thin, delicate mist, full of delicious gladness and coolness. Slowly and lingeringly it rises higher and higher and gathers itself together, forming an enchanting picture of what he recognizes to be his earliest youth's long-wished-for, highest good. His deepest heart's earliest treasures well up, his first light-winged Aurora-love, — the half-felt, first, hardly understood glance, which, held fast, outglanced all other treasures. "Like soul beauty the gracious form uprears itself; dissolves not, but upward

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into the ether ascends, and draws the best of my inner man away with it."

There are few things in poetry finer than this description of the effects of Greek culture when it has dropped its material part and brought us home to ourselves. It places a man on serene mountain peaks, giving him a boundless horizon; it fills the blue expanse with majestic forms; it reveals the meaning of the great epochs of history. At the same time it rejuvenates the heart, making its early treasures well up like a pure, perennial spring. In fact, it restores man to himself, and gives him an adequate form in which he can give his best self lofty and boundless expression. How deeply Goethe felt the value of Greek culture in the later years of his life, when he was writing the second part of *Faust*, we may learn from a passage in a letter to Zelber, written when the poet was seventy-eight years old: "If now, in my quiet days, I had youthful faculties at my command, I should devote myself to Greek, in spite of all the difficulties I know. Nature and Aristotle should be my sole study (Augenmerk)." And the later acts of the play are full of Homeric and Æschylean compounds, idioms, and expressions.

It is, of course, through Mephistopheles' influence that Faust has been placed where he is. Accordingly, as soon as his enthusiastic monologue closes Mephistopheles appears, traveling in seven-league boots, and tries to persuade him that all that glory of nature which he has been admiring is due to his and the other devils' escaping from hell, — in fact, tries to bring him back to mediæval supernaturalism. But Faust, now schooled in

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Greek thought and far removed from the fables of Christian mythology, knows that the face of nature is due to a process of evolution. Mephistopheles maintains that the uncultured man's view of nature is the true one, and that the philosopher cannot understand it. Faust replies with bitter sarcasm on those who believe in the miraculous in nature: "It is worth observing how the devils regard nature." Mephistopheles, however, insists that the devils had a hand in the construction of nature, and that they are the people to achieve great things. The earth is theirs. He then asks Faust whether, having now seen from his elevation the kingdoms of the world and all the glory of them, he has not descried something that will satisfy his desires.

Mephistopheles is now determined to make his highest bid for Faust's soul, namely, the same bid that Satan made for the soul of Jesus. To his doubting question Faust replies, "Yes, after all! Something great did attract me. Guess." "That's easily done," says Mephistopheles, and then proceeds to describe what he would choose out of all the world. This is nothing more nor less than a magnificent Eastern seraglio and harem, with bowers, waterfalls, and plenty of women. "I say women because, once for all, I think beauties in the plural." This, of course, was just the choice which the Oriental barbarians made after they had obtained a veneer of Greek culture. Faust, with the true Greek spirit, replies, "Nasty and modern! Sardanapalus!" The idea of being a Byronic Sardanapalus is to Faust revolting. Mephistopheles is at his wits' end. He cannot even guess what Faust wants, and thinks he wants

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to fly to the moon. Faust replies with vehemence: "No! this earth affords sufficient room for great deeds. Things astounding shall succeed. I feel force for bold industry." Mephistopheles sneeringly remarks that, having just associated with heroines, Faust desires heroic fame. Faust answers: "Mastership I will win, property! Fame is nothing, the deed is all!" These words contain the *dénouement* of the whole play, just as the words, "In thy Naught I hope to find the All," contain the turning point. Faust now sees that the All lies in just what is Naught for Mephistopheles, — in creative energy, of which the chorus of disciples had sung on the Easter morning in words which, indeed, contain the solution of the whole play:

> The buried One,
> The living sublime One,
> Has gloriously raised himself on high;
> In the joy of becoming,
> He is near to creative bliss.
> We alas! are here
> On the earth's breast to suffer.

Goethe never uttered any deeper truth than this.

Thus from his Pisgah height of Greek vision Faust has descried the truth revealed by Aristotle, that man's salvation lies not in pleasure or wealth or position or fame, but in rational, self-determined action, pure *ἐνέργεια*. Mephistopheles thinks him a fool, of course; but Faust now, thanks to the Hellenic vision conscious of his own spiritual superiority, retorts: "Of all this nothing is granted to thee. What knowest thou of what man demands? Thy repellent essence, bitter, sharp, what knows it of what man needs?"

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If Faust could here shake himself free from Mephistopheles and carry out his purposes in the light of his new vision, his salvation would be sure. But he is not yet strong enough for that. He must first come in contact with something mightier than even Greek culture, namely, with Christian religion. He must be dashed to pieces on the eternal rock of that, before he is able to curse Mephistopheles and all his works. For the present he is still willing to accept the offer of the crestfallen Mephistopheles' help in the carrying out of his desire. This desire is to conquer nature and subject it to spirit. From his mountain height Faust has observed the sea aimlessly washing up on a large tract of land, rendering it unfit for the home, or for any use, of spiritual beings. It is neither sea nor land. He determines by dikes to shut out the sea from the whole tract and make it inhabitable. Mephistopheles must therefore obtain for him the ownership of it, and help him to redeem it from the sea. This is Faust's last demand. He calls upon Mephistopheles to subserve a universal end, and Mephistopheles is betrayed into doing so. Nevertheless he does it in his own way, and that, of course, poisons the whole.

As they are speaking, the sound of martial music is heard. Faust says: "War again! The wise man rejoices not at that." Mephistopheles, with the true commercial spirit, replies that anything is good from which one can derive personal advantage. He sees, indeed, a way in this war to obtain the land for Faust. On Faust's demanding an explanation Mephistopheles informs him of what has happened to the emperor since they left him.

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The false wealth with which they had cheated him, in the shape of paper money, has done its work. The emperor has gone on believing that the combination of ruling and enjoying is possible, nay, desirable and beautiful. "A great mistake," says Faust; "he who is to rule must in ruling find his blessedness. His breast is filled with lofty will. . . . Pleasure vulgarizes." In this we see how completely Faust has escaped from the arms of Mephistopheles into those of Aristotle. Mephistopheles goes on to say that, as a result of the emperor's attempt to rule and enjoy, the empire is in a state of anarchy and rebellion. The selfish individualism of which he has set the example has at last gone so far as to provoke a reaction, countenanced by the old ecclesiastical authority, Der Aufruhr ward geheiligt, a phrase which points to a possibility in future political life (the papacy may become socialistic and hallow the socialist movement). A rival emperor has been set up, and a battle is about to take place. Mephistopheles' plan is, by making Faust appear to win the battle for the rightful emperor, to obtain for him a grant of the boundless seashore for his great enterprise. The rest of this act we may pass over briefly. It shows, in a highly dramatic though terribly overloaded and dallying way, how by Mephistopheles' arts, his power over material nature, or (which is practically the same thing) the power of creating glamours before superstitious eyes, the battle is won, and how a reaction, favorable to the church and all the old superstitions, at once sets in, — a warning to all those who believe in uncontrolled individualism. Faust easily obtains a grant of the seashore, free from

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those vested rights which descend from age to age like a hereditary disease. In other words, the reaction in favor of the old order is made possible only by a concession which lays the ax at its very root. It is curious to observe how, in this act, Mephistopheles is compelled to undo much of the mischief he did in introducing his paper money. Thus evil must cancel evil.

Between the fourth and fifth acts of the play a long period — perhaps fifty years — is supposed to elapse. During this time Faust has been busy conquering nature and making it subservient to human ends. He has forced back the sea by dikes for many miles, and laid out the district thus redeemed as a garden, inhabited by a teeming, prosperous population. His harbors are full of ships, bringing the produce of all lands. But even this — practically the kingdoms of the world and all the glory of them — does not make him happy. During all these years of industrial and social enterprise, crowned with complete success, he has not found one moment to which he could say, "Oh, stay; thou art so fair!" Mephistopheles has toiled for him with all his might, in all his enterprises done his best to satisfy him; but all in vain. There still haunts him, in the midst of all his absorbing practical activity, the consciousness of a higher life. This is brought vividly and obtrusively before him by the existence of persons for whom that life is the all-important thing. Just outside his possessions, on the downs behind the ancient water line, are a cottage and chapel surrounded by ancient lindens. Here dwell an aged couple, Philemon and Baucis, not only types of homely, gentle, mediæval piety, but also types of persons

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whose lives are not conditioned by dependence upon any great industrial organization, but by direct dependence upon God, who feeds the young ravens when they cry to him. Here, then, we have two orders, or ideals, of life sharply contrasted, — the organized life of society, which finds its end within itself in an ever-increasing well-being and culture, and claims to be self-sufficient, and the religious, individual life which, denying the self-sufficiency of the present phase of existence, looks beyond it to eternity for the meaning of life. In a word, we have here the contrast between culture and religion. Faust, the champion of culture, stands in bitter opposition to Philemon and Baucis, the votaries of religion, the description of whose life, sweet and simple, forms one of the most charming episodes of the play. Their very existence is an eyesore to him. As he views his possessions from the closed balcony of his palace — for he lives in a palace — he hears the ringing of their little chapel bell, and flies into a passion and swears like Mephistopheles himself. He wishes he were a thousand miles away from it, and swears that he will get possession of the little property and stop that ringing. As Faust ceases raving a vessel commanded by Mephistopheles, manned by his violent crew, and laden with the products of all lands, lays to under the palace windows. The crew salute Faust, expecting recognition and praise, but he is so occupied with his grievance that he pays no attention to them. Unless he can get rid of the religious ideal his culture ideal will never satisfy him.

Mephistopheles, who had set out with two ships, has returned with twenty, having apparently acquired eighteen

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through piracy. He proclaims, in the true spirit of much modern industry: "If I know anything about shipping, people ask about the *what* and not about the *how*. War, commerce, and piracy are a trinity not to be separated." Finally, Mephistopheles, the spirit of commerce, succeeds in attracting Faust's attention, and, after a little complaint at Faust's indifference to his efforts, advises him to extend his influence to the whole world, making it a commercial unity:

> So ſprich, daß hier, hier vom Palaſt
> Dein Arm die ganze Welt umfaßt;[1]

in other words, to subject men to the laws of a mere economic institution. Faust is evidently ready to listen to such advice. He wants the earth, as every millionaire does. And, first of all, he must have Philemon's cottage, and have it for an abode from which he can overlook the whole world. Very characteristically, he says:

> Die wenigen Bäume, nicht mein eigen,
> Verderben mir den Weltbeſitz.
> . . . . . .
> Des Allgewaltigen Willenstür
> Bricht ſich an dieſem Sande hier.
> Wie ſchaff' ich mir es vom Gemüte!
> Das Glöcklein läutet, und ich wüte.[2]

[1] Do but speak, and from thy palace here
Thine arm the whole world doth embrace.

[2] [Those few trees not mine own, that field,
Possession of the world impair.
. . . . . .
The will that nothing could withstand,
Is broken here upon the sand:
How from the vexing thought be safe?
The bell is pealing, and I chafe!]

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Before we consider Mephistopheles' reply let us take in the full meaning of these words. They show us exactly what Faust has been doing all these years with the assistance of Mephistopheles. It has been nothing less than founding an industrial despotism, whose head has ruled in a perfectly violent and capricious way. Faust's subjects, however prosperous they may have become, living in luxury among pleasant parks and gardens, are mere slaves. They have no part whatever in their own government, and are in fact mere nonentities. Not one of them is presented to us, not one act of theirs is recorded. They have no individuality whatsoever, any more than the similarly situated Phœnicians, whom in all ways they resemble. Faust, therefore, with all his conquest of nature, has not benefited men, which proves that there is no necessary connection between these two things. If Faust has freed his subjects from nature, it is only by subjecting them to the yet more dehumanizing tyranny of an industrial system. And how tyrannical that system can be is shown by what happens immediately. Mephistopheles is, of course, quite of the opinion that the obnoxious bell ringing should be stopped. It is a Hauptverdruß, that must embitter life. No cultured ear can bear to listen to it. The cursed ding-dong-dinging (Bim-Baum-Bimmel) beclouds the glad evening sky (Think of it!); it mixes up with everything from the cradle to the grave, as if, between ding and dong, life were a vanished dream (verſchollener Traum). The resistance of the old couple, says Faust, spoils the noblest attainment, so that, to his deep pain, he must at last cease to be just. He accordingly commissions Mephistopheles to go and

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evict the old couple, and settle them comfortably on a nice little property on his new land. He speaks of them just as he might speak of old horses or dogs. He is despotically kind, taking no account whatsoever of the personality or ideals of the persons with whom he deals. What an infinite contrast between the spirit of despotic industrialism, which pretends to subserve culture, and that of religion, as represented by the quiet, kindly lives of Philemon and Baucis! Faust has given his consent to the use of unjust violence in the moving of the old couple, and in so doing has committed the worst of treasons against humanity. Of course Mephistopheles, the spirit of Mammon worship, is only too ready to obey, and he does so without setting any limits to his violence. With his violent companions he goes in the night to move the old people. Clamoring noisily for admittance, they so frighten them that both die on the spot, while a warm-hearted stranger who has been visiting them, and who offers resistance, is mercilessly put to death. In the confusion house, chapel, and ancient lindens catch fire and burn up. The tower watcher of Faust's palace sees the whole occurrence from his place. While Faust is planning to build a great tower among the lindens Mephistopheles returns and reports the manner in which the tyrannic order has been carried out. It has been obeyed to the letter, as such orders always will be. The result is a funeral pile for three persons. Faust declares that his order has been misunderstood, maintains that he meant exchange, not robbery, and curses the thoughtless, wild attack, telling the devils to divide the curse among them. These in chorus remark that this is the old

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experience. He who lends himself as the tool of violence must be prepared not only to forgo all gratitude but to lose everything, even life itself. And off they go.

Mephistopheles' last and most successful attempt to satisfy Faust — to satisfy him with the conquest of nature and the generalship of industry — has utterly failed. He has not won his bet, and the earth has no more to give.

Faust peers out sadly into the night, and the scene becomes weird and impressive. Now over a hundred years old, he stands face to face with life's last and primest agony.

> The stars hide glance and sheen;
> The fire sinks and burns low,
> An eerie gust fans it, and
> Brings smoke and vapor up to me.
> Rashly commanded, too rashly done!
> What hovers, ghostlike, toward me?

In the deep, rayless midnight of Faust's soul the smoke of the burnt cottage and chapel, emblems of the religious ideal of life, shape themselves into four phantoms, who now glide forward like shadows and name themselves. They are Want, Debt, Necessity, and Anxiety. The first three — even Debt — can find no entrance into Faust's closed balcony; but Anxiety creeps in through the keyhole. Riches protect a man against Want, Debt, and Necessity or Trial (Not); but they cannot guard him against Anxiety. She creeps in through the keyhole. As the other three depart they see, approaching in the distance, their brother Death. Faust, in his palace, hears them whisper the word and knows what it means. But he is not ready to die. He says: "I have

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not yet fought myself into freedom. Could I but remove magic from my path and altogether unlearn the conjuror's arts, — if I stood before thee, Nature, simply as a man, then it were worth while to be a man. I was so once, before I sought it in the darksome (im Düſtern), before I blasphemously cursed myself and the world. Now the air is full of such spooks that no one knows how to avoid them." They ruin and defile everything, like harpies. All at once he feels the presence of one of them, and in great excitement exclaims, "Is some one here?" Anxiety answers, "Yes." Faust asks, "Who?" She merely answers "I am just here." When Faust orders her to go away she says, "I am in my proper place." Faust has at first a moment of anger, but then, quieting down, begs her utter no word of incantation. She then describes her own nature and ends by asking, "Have you never known Anxiety?" Faust's reply is characteristic:

I have only raced through the world;
I have seized every appetite by the hair.
What satisfied not, I let go;
What escaped me, I bade Godspeed to.
I have only desired and accomplished,
And again desired, and so with violence
Stormed through my life; at first great and mighty,
But now it goes wisely, thoughtfully.
The circle of the earth is sufficiently known to me,
And the view into the beyond is barred.
Fool is he who turns his eyes, blinking, in that direction,
And imagines one like himself above the clouds.
Let him stand firmly here and look about him.
To the man of stuff this world is not dumb.
Why need he go roaming into eternity?

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What he knows, he may grasp.
So let him walk through his earthly day.
When spirits spook let him still pursue his way.
Let him find torment and bliss in going on,—
He, unsatisfied every moment!

As the meaning of these words has been frequently misunderstood, we must dwell for a moment upon them. In the first place, Faust recognizes his own error in allowing himself so long to be the victim of capricious lusts or appetites, and in going through life like a destroying tempest. At the same time, he has in this way learnt sufficiently the character of this earth to know that it is the proper field for man's activities. Our outlook into any world besides this is barred, and he is a fool who takes any fancied future conditions into his calculation in shaping his action here. He need not, for instance, take lessons so as to be ready for playing forever on a golden harp. But this must by no means be understood to mean that Goethe wishes to cast any doubt upon the immortality of the individual. The contrary is clearly shown by the closing scenes of the play. It means only that the distinction between the present and the eternal world is altogether a false one, that this is the eternal world, that we are eternal beings now, and ought to be doing eternal work under the conditions in which we find ourselves. The man who really is a man will find the voice of God uttering itself in this world, and following that voice he will find enough to do without troubling himself with anxious fears as to what the future may hold for him. Only the coward, the slave of anxiety, will do that. And as to personal satisfaction,

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which Faust has been seeking all his life, it is a fool's dream. Man, unsatisfied his whole life long, must find pain and pleasure in going on. In the words of Tennyson,

> The wages of sin is death : if the wages of Virtue be dust,
> Would she have heart to endure for the life of the worm and the fly?
> She desires no isles of the blest, no quiet seats of the just,
> To rest in a golden grove, or to bask in a summer sky :
> Give her the wages of going on, and not to die.

This is the new gospel of deed, the gospel of modern life, and it is a noble one. Not in the goal and in the prize, not in a future of rest, but in the race, in the present work, with its boundless possibilities of pleasure and pain, are we to find our field of worth. Religion has too often darkened and degraded human life by placing the meaning of it in another sphere of existence, of which this forms no part, which we cannot grasp or know, in which we cannot act, and about which we are therefore in continual anxiety. This state of mind is excellently described by Anxiety, who, indeed, represents it: "Of all treasures he cannot put himself in possession of one. Happiness and unhappiness become a mere whim. He starves in the midst of plenty. Be it joy or sorrow, he puts it off to another day and is present only in the future, and so he has never done."

The curse of human life, and it is largely due to false notions of religion, is the want of power to enjoy the present. This Faust now clearly sees. This is the right way, of which he has been always conscious even in his dark stress. Hence Anxiety, though she can slip in and speak for a moment, can have no permanent influence.

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The man who has sought knowledge, through knowledge found objects of love, and used these as motives to action has already begun a life which obviously must be eternal, and so he is proof against Anxiety. All that she can do to him is to make him physically blind. She curses him, declares that men are blind all their lives long, and orders him, *who has not been blind*, to be so at the end. She breathes upon him and he is blind. He says:

> The night without seems to penetrate deeper,
> *Only in my inmost self there shines clear light;*
> What I have thought out I hasten to complete.

Faust's eyes have closed upon the narrow world of self, but have opened upon the great world of universal ends. There a light burns clearly, a light that gives meaning to life and shows its infinitude. In that light Faust recognizes that his industrial enterprise has its value, and accordingly he gives orders that it be proceeded with. He orders Mephistopheles to make his lemures dig a ditch (Graben); Mephistopheles says it will be a grave (Grab), if he is rightly informed. Faust then enters into conversation with Mephistopheles, asking him to drain a great marsh that is poisoning all the neighborhood, so that within it there may be a "paradisaic land." "Yes," he adds, "to this view I am quite devoted. This is wisdom's final conclusion. He alone deserves freedom and life who must daily make the conquest of them. And so, surounded by peril, childhood, manhood, and age will here pass their worthy years. Such a bustle I should gladly see, and gladly stand with a free people on a free soil. To that moment I might say, 'Oh, stay; thou art so fair!' The traces of my earthly days cannot vanish in

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eons. In the presentiment of such high happiness I now enjoy the highest moment." With these words Faust sinks back dead, and the lemures lay him on the ground. What do these all-determining words mean? Simply this: Faust, his eyes open upon the world of universal ends, and now seeing clearly that truth which has dimly guided him through his dark strivings, recognizes that man finds his end only in the active conquest of freedom, a task which from its very nature cannot be completed in time. But for this purpose there must be a free people upon a free soil, not a slavish, paternally governed people, like his bedeviled subjects, upon a bedeviled soil. Faust sees the error which poisons all his enjoyment of his present work, the curse of selfishness, into which he is continually betrayed through his association with Mephistopheles. Now, in the very last moment, he calls upon Mephistopheles, his little subjective self, to do a piece of universal work which shall help to create a paradise of free men. In this very request Mephistopheles is already overcome, though he does not know it. Faust sees clearly that, if he could behold and help to realize such a condition of things, a community of human beings diligently working out their own freedom, the moment would have arrived to which he might say, "Oh, stay; thou art so fair!" In the prospect of such a moment he enjoys the highest moment possible for him in his present state.

Faust, like Paracelsus, recognizes the truth only in his last moment, only when it is no longer of any use to him for this life, — a strange result if there were no further life in which he might actualize it. He has not

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attained satisfaction, but he sees the form in which satisfaction must come, if at all. He is just ready to begin life, instead of ending it. Mephistopheles has lost his bet, of course. But just as he has never for a single instant recognized the meaning of Faust's aspiration, or what was implied in the bet, so, of course, he does not recognize that he has lost it. It cannot be got into his low head that man's happiness cannot be found in any moment, but only in going on, and ever on, toward freedom, — in *ἐνέργεια*, as Aristotle said, not in mere enjoyment. Accordingly he thinks he has won his bet, thinks that Faust, after trying on his screen all sorts of changing forms and finding them unsatisfactory, has at last tried the vacant screen, and so has found

Den letzten ſchlechten leeren Augenblick,[1]

and tried to hold it fast. So true is it that Faust has found his All in Mephistopheles' Naught, in free energy, not in the static results of energy.

Mephistopheles in triumph shouts Es iſt vollbracht! the last words of Jesus. The chorus of lemures reply, "It is past." "Past!" exclaims Mephistopheles, "a stupid word. Why past? Past, and pure nothing, perfect monotony [*Nirvâna*]! What means then for us the eternal creation! To sweep away the created into nothing! '*Then* it is past!' What can you read in that? It is as if it had never been and yet goes round in a circle as if it were. I should prefer the eternally empty." The Schopenhauerian, pessimistic notion that the end of all is *Nirvâna*, though it may do for ſchlotternde

[1] [The last, worst, empty moment.]

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Lemuren, geflickte Halbnaturen, is too much even for the devil. He cannot believe that the world is a mere round-and-round of phenomena, with nothing that can be read in them, no eternal meaning, no soul. Even *he* will not, cannot believe that Faust was a mere succession of phenomena to himself or anybody else. Behind the phenomena, the empirical self, there was something eternal, something which Mephistopheles hopes to catch, in order that, according to the compact, it may serve him in the other world.

With this belief he calls upon his lemures and other material creatures to catch the soul as it leaves the body. None of them knows just where to look for it, so they must keep watch everywhere. One of the jaws of hell is brought near, to be ready to receive it as soon as Mephistopheles has stamped it with his stamp. Within these jaws is seen the city of fire, with its red breakers dashing to the lips and damned sinners swimming on them, vainly trying to escape. Mephistopheles is sure of his prey, when all at once on the right a splendor appears in the heavens, and a crowd of angels descends singing, promising forgiveness of sins, animation of dust, bliss to all natures. Mephistopheles speaks of them with the utmost contempt. Their singing is to him "hideous noise," and they themselves are "also devils, only in disguise." He calls upon his hosts for increased energy and watchfulness. The angels, prominent among whom is Gretchen, now scatter roses on the corpse. As they approach, the devils, whose existence is negation, shrink back in spite of all Mephistopheles' encouragement. He bids them blow upon the roses in order to shrivel them

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— the breath of hate, of course. They do so, and the roses, being roses of love, at once become giftig-klare Flammen, against which the opposition of the devils is of no avail. The angels now sing:

Blüten, die seligen,
Flammen, die fröhlichen,
Liebe verbreiten sie,
Wonne bereiten sie,
Herz, wie es mag.[1]

The devils are completely routed by the fire of love, to them a completely hostile element, and tumble backwards into the jaws of hell, much to the disgust of Mephistopheles, who alone remains, being Hellenized and therefore different from the rest. The fire of love lays hold of him in the form of a very Greek fire indeed, and spreads to head, heart, and liver. But instead of purifying him, as it would a nobler nature, it only brings out all his fundamental grossness and bestiality. He finds love far keener than hell fire, but it only arouses in him a most ignominious passion for one of the angels. While he is completely absorbed by this foul appetite, the angels carry off the soul of Faust. Mephistopheles soon becomes aware of his unique loss and the fact that his sixty years of labor and care have all gone for nothing. At the end he has shown his true nature, the utter negation of all that makes human life possible, — mere, aimless, absurd animal passion.

[1] [Blossoms, with rapture crowned,
Flames fraught with gladness,
Love they diffuse around,
Banishing sadness,
As the heart may.]

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Faust is saved, saved because he was always true to himself, and though erring greatly in his dark stress, always unerringly bent upon self-realization. It is only upon men who do not do this, who sink into passivity and pleasure, that the devil has really any hold.

The poet might very well have stopped here, and left it to each reader's imagination to picture the future of the saved Faust. But he has not done so. Having recognized the nature and implications of the activity in which and by which man is saved, he thought he could picture to himself and to his readers the continuation of it even beyond the grave. I suspect he did so lest any one should doubt his earnest belief in the immortality of the individual soul, or imagine he confounded salvation with *Nirvâna* or with any Comtean, subjective immortality.

Goethe, true to his love for nature and his belief that it is not hostile to spirit but helpful and correlated, makes the angels carry Faust's immortal part to a stupendous mountain region inhabited by anchorites scattered in huts among the rocks at different heights. Here different hermits express their inward condition, showing the various states of the soul after it has cast off the bonds of selfishness and partiality and begun to live with the life of the universe. They are examples of men who, unlike Faust, have discovered the secret of life before that last moment, and are now acting as a sort of medium between earth and heaven, apparently conscious of the life of both. First comes "the ecstatic father," who prays that he may be freed from all the Naught, even if arrows, lances, clubs, and thunderbolts should be required

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in the process, and that the all-outliving star, the kernel of eternal love, may shine forth in him:

Glänze der Dauerſtern,
Ewiger Liebe Kern.

The "profound father" sees love everywhere, even in the convulsions and storms of nature, and prays that he may be completely invaded by it, so that his heart may be calmed and enlightened. Love, love, love, the illuminating love of the soul, that is what they are all praying for, to burn out self and make them members of the divine commonwealth, where there are many gods in one substance, which is Love. This "profound father" is a most interesting character, in that he sees love even in those things which seem least to reveal it, and which are most apt to conquer faith, as they are pretty sure to do in shallow natures.

The "seraphic father" addresses a band of freshly arrived, newborn babes, souls that come like a radiant morning cloud through the pines. They are innocent, sinless, without vice, but also without virtue, being without experience. In their consciousness no world has built itself up. They have even to ask who they are, not having formed even the concept of self. The seraphic father allows them to take possession of his body and look through his eyes, and also explains to them what they are and what they see. They are

Für die Eltern gleich Verlorne,
Für die Engel zum Gewinn.

They do not, however, like his rather wild surroundings, and ask to be set free again. The father bids them

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ascend higher that they may continually grow by greater and greater nearness to God. "For it is the spirits' sustenance that prevails in the freest ether: the revelation of eternal loving, that unfolds into blessedness," — a noble expression of the deepest truth we know. They accordingly mount to the summit to await the soul of Faust, in order to enjoy his experience. In a moment the angels appear, carrying Faust's immortal part. In their song they declare: "Saved is the noble member of the spirit world from the evil one. Whoever aspiringly exerts himself, him can we redeem. And if the love from above has taken part in him, the holy host meets him with hearty welcome." Salvation for a man depends not upon what he outwardly accomplishes, but upon the earnestness of his aspiration and struggle, and above all, upon his love. Goethe entirely agreed with Plato and Plotinus in holding that it is with love that a man grasps reality, and thus becomes a true son of God, a member of the divine commonwealth. The younger angels now tell how they rescued Faust by means of the roses scattered by the love-sainted (liebend-heilige) penitent women, and how Satan suffered from the roses of love. The more highly perfected angels declare that the work of complete redemption, that is, the cleansing of Faust's soul from its earthly impurities, cannot be accomplished by any angel, but only by eternal love. Faust's soul, which, as far as spiritual life is concerned, is in an infantile condition, is handed over to the innocent babes, who carry it up to the highest pinnacle of the mountain. Thanks to its wide earthly experience it is soon beautiful and great with holy life.

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The eternal love, as opposed to the merely temporal love, is typified by the Virgin Mary, who is now seen by the "Marian Doctor" as she ascends in glory to heaven amid a crowd of redeemed women. He addresses a prayer to her, begging that he may be permitted to gaze into the secret of eternal love: "Highest mistress of the world! allow me in the blue, outspread tent of heaven to behold thy secret." It is interesting to observe that the Lord, who in the prologue of the play appears as Power, is here replaced by the Virgin who appears as Love, which is the supreme mistress of the world. We might say, in the phenomenal world God appears as Power, and masculine, in the spiritual world as Love, and feminine. Mary now approaches, accompanied by a host of penitents among whom are Mary of Magdala (the great sinner), the woman of Samaria, and Mary of Egypt, in all of whom the taints of temporal love have been burnt away in the pure flame of eternal love. They all plead for unbounded pardon for Gretchen, who has sinned but once and in ignorance. Gretchen now appears, pardoned and supremely happy. Her Henry, after whom she called so pathetically from her prison cell, has come back to her. Her faulty earthly love has passed over into a pure, heavenly, eternal love. The seed sown in corruption on earth has blossomed in incorruption in heaven. How different her final attitude from that in which we left her at the end of the first part, when she made the saving choice between good and evil: "Thine am I, Father, rescue me. . . . Henry, I shudder at thee."

Meanwhile Faust has grown rapidly in spiritual power, far outstripping the babes who have him in charge, and

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whom he will now repay by imparting to them his experience. He has stripped off his earthly bonds and formed himself a new body of pure ether, in which he comes forward in all the strength and beauty of youth. As the new day still dazzles him, Gretchen begs that she may be allowed to instruct him. The *Mater Gloriosa* replies: "Come, raise thyself to higher spheres; when he senses thee he will follow." Then comes a prayer by the *Doctor Marianus* to the Virgin, or Eternal Love: "Look up and meet the saving look, all ye repentant gentle ones, in gratitude transmuting yourselves to a blessed destiny. May every better sense be prompt in thy service; Virgin, Mother, Queen, Goddess, continue thy favor!" And last comes the *chorus mysticus* with the supreme words: "All the transient is but a parable; the unattainable here becomes attainment; the indescribable [unthinkable] — here it is done; the eternally feminine draws us upward [educates us]." With this the play ends. Faust has won his eternity.

Let us now in a few words sum up as well as we can the meaning and outcome of *Faust*, the play. Faust, the man, set out as the representative of the institution-bound Middle Age, an age that lived according to traditional prescription and formulas, an age which on that account lived an unreal life, out of living contact with the world. From these institutions Faust breaks away as far as possible, seeking to become autonomous instead of heteronomous, and by so doing to come into real, living, saving contact with the world of reality. Of course, under this impulse there lies implicit the major premise that human satisfaction lies in a real relation to

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the real and not in a mere ideal relation to the ideal, to an order of things not yet visible, like the satisfaction sought in the Middle Age. In other words, it is assumed throughout that life is not to be conditioned by principles derived from the unseen world, but by principles derived from the seen world. The question is, What is the relation to the real which yields complete satisfaction? And this was the question that Goethe tried to answer. When we say this, however, we must beware of thinking that his answer is the only one that might have been given, or that it must necessarily be the same for all men. The poet chose to answer it for a particular sort of man; he did not answer it for all men. It is entirely conceivable that it should have been answered in an entirely different way for a different sort of man, say for a Luther, as indeed it was and is answered differently. Perhaps, if Goethe had started with the problem clear from the first, he would have treated it quite differently; indeed he certainly would have done so, just as Faust sees in the end that his whole connection with Mephistopheles has been a mistake. But he began his work as a mere pathetic drama (to use a phrase of Aristotle's), based upon an old popular legend which contained Mephistopheles as an essential element, and that element had to be retained. There is no difficulty whatever in conceiving a man working out the problem for himself without any Mephistopheles, and that, indeed, is a subject for a future drama which, in the hands of a great artist, will be far greater than *Faust*. A Jesus, as we all know, rejects the pact with Satan and solves the problem in a far truer and nobler way than Faust; for,

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let us say it at once, the meaning and purpose of life as reached by Faust is infinitely inferior in every way to that reached by Jesus. *Faust* cannot hold a candle to the gospel, even as poetry, to say nothing of philosophy, ethics, and religion. The problem of *Faust* is not the universal one which meets every loyal soul at the present day: How, having broken away from the traditional, institution-bound ideal of life, shall a man come into living, saving contact with the reality of life? but, How shall a man do this who makes a pact with Mephistopheles, that is, who seeks self-satisfaction without reference to any one but himself? Of course, the first lesson that such a man has to learn is that no satisfaction at all can be found on any such condition. And that, indeed, is all that Faust learns during his sixty years of association with Mephistopheles. At the very last moment he learns that his entire life has been a mistake, that he has been on the wrong track from the first day to the last, and only when Anxiety has entirely blinded him to this life does he obtain a glimpse of the truth. And what is the truth of which he obtains a glimpse? This, that satisfaction is to be found only in devotion to the ends of human freedom and culture. But, as one never knows how a thing will seem till he has actually experienced it, we have no guarantee that Faust would really find this more satisfying than he did the love of Gretchen or that of Helen, which seemed in prospect to promise so much. Here there is certainly a capital defect in the whole conception. Faust dies believing that he will find satisfaction in something which he never has had an opportunity of trying! That was not

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the first time he had so believed. We may, therefore, reasonably question whether the solution of life's problem set forth in *Faust* is really the true one, or even *a* true one.

I, for one, am firmly convinced that it is not; that, on the contrary, it is an imperfect and in great measure a fallacious one. In the first place, let us notice that while Faust declares that all vision of the eternal world is cut off for man, and that he is a fool who takes that world into consideration, the poet finds, on the contrary, that he can tell us a great deal about that world. Now, if Goethe knows Faust's agnosticism[1] is nugatory, why may not Faust? Furthermore, Goethe, though making his hero reject and curse all the old theological notions, first among which surely is grace, nevertheless introduces grace at the end as the sole means whereby Faust is saved. For, be it remembered, Faust is not saved by his lifelong efforts, nor even by his final vision of truth, but by the loving angels. It is true that his efforts

[1] Here there is a patent contradiction. It is not true that the eternal world is closed against us, or that the man is a fool who takes it into account. On the contrary, the man is a fool who does not take it into account. And here we have Goethe ignominiously falling back into the old worn-out mediæval view, according to which the world is divided into two, — a temporal and an eternal, — and utterly failing to see that what we call the temporal world is the eternal one, only seen imperfectly. It is this fatal division, this shutting out of the eternal from life, that makes life mean, narrow, and beggarly, and in many cases not worth living. But one cannot help feeling all through *Faust*, and indeed through Goethe's writings generally, that, for some reason or other, the eternity of spirit and of the spiritual world was not an abiding and essential element in his consciousness. He postulates such eternity indeed, and seems to hope that there is something corresponding to the postulate; but it is only a mediæval ideal, not a living, experiential, all-determining reality to him.

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make it possible for them to redeem him, but that is all; they do not make his redemption sure. He is saved in the old mediæval way which he had repudiated. And, after all, in what sense can it be said that Faust hat immer ſtrebend ſich bemüht? Had he accomplished what he did without Mephistopheles, that might have been true; but with Mephistopheles, he had only to command and the thing was done. Here is an inconsequence in the fundamental idea of the work which, it seems to me, there is no getting over. Faust's account of himself at the end and the view of him expressed by the angels and made the basis of their action has nothing corresponding to it in fact in the body of the play. Goethe discounted Mephistopheles altogether in summing up the results of Faust's life.

I am, therefore, distinctly of the opinion that, taken as a whole, and regarded as the working out of a great moral problem, *Faust* is a distinct failure. Its conclusion is utterly lame, and in no sense the logical or even the æsthetic outcome of the action of the play. *Faust* is the image of Nebuchadnezzar with the order of its materials inverted. The feet and legs are of gold, the abdomen of silver, the breast of bronze, the head of iron, and the brow of clay. It is like some of those statues which we find in Italian museums, pieced together out of fragments of ancient Greek and Roman works of widely different ages and styles. The parts, as parts, are interesting, and dimly suggest wonderful wholes; but the patchy whole (das geflickte Ganze) is a nondescript monstrosity which solves no problem and leaves only a vague and unsatisfactory impression upon the mind.

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I may perhaps be pardoned if, in conclusion, I venture to state what I think the solution ought to have been, what the solution as historically worked out really is. And this I shall do best, I think, by contrasting it with the older view which it superseded and which Faust, if he had remained true to his own principles, would have altogether rejected. According to the mediæval view man as a moral being is heteronomous, that is, the law according to which his life is to be directed is not organized within himself but only in a being outside of him, over against whom he is unfree and to whom he stands in a relation of moral dependence. This view was externally organized in the great Catholic Church, which is merely an institution expressing and utilizing that heteronomy. It is a compound of Jewish ethics, Platonic republicanism, and Christian mythology. The Protestant movement, though thus far a mere attempt to set aside the Platonic part, contains, I believe, the principle which, when fully worked out, will set aside the whole fabric of mediæval externalism.

According to the principle of Protestantism man is autonomous, that is, he has the whole moral law organized within himself. We may perhaps say that just as the true citizen has the whole legal, and even ethical, system of the state and of society organized within him, so the true man has the whole moral and religious life organized within him, so that for him the moral and religious life consists in expressing his own true and universal essence in every act. Hence he is not, like his mediæval grandfather, saved by external grace, for which he has to plead, but by internal will, which he has only to exert.

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The gospel of the future, I believe, is that every human being has all the divine perfections organized in himself, and has only to express them — to energize them, as Aristotle would say — in order to be perfect as the Father is perfect, — a condition which, it seems to me, is the only one that promises any ultimate satisfaction to the individual human soul. It is said that Christ thought it no robbery to claim equality with God. The future will declare that it is no robbery for any one to do the same thing, provided he will so live as to make good his claim.

Broad and generous as Goethe was, I can find no utterance of his which shows that he had even a dawning of this truth, which is the necessary presupposition of all true liberty. He, therefore, saw no way of bringing man to redemption except by falling back upon the old Catholic doctrine of grace, thus really reducing his work, viewed as a whole, to an absurdity. Unless the universe is organized in each one of us we cannot as individuals be universal, and therefore cannot be eternal. *Aut deus aut nullus*, — that is the alternative. That is the truth which Jesus saw, expressed, and lived. The world drew the entirely right conclusion when, after much careful thinking, it declared him a god. The difficulty was, the world rested in that, and did not follow in his footsteps, which is just what men must do if life is ever again to be lived enthusiastically, with full meaning and purpose. He who shall embody this truth — which, whether we know it or not, is implicit in this American life of ours — in a great work of art will produce something as superior to *Faust* as Goethe's drama is to *Doctor Faustus*. *Faust* is after all only the artistic embodiment of that half-hearted,

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half-conscious movement made up of the Reformation and the Renaissance — half mediæval and heteronomously ethical, half modern and autonomous; not that of the completed movement which has become fully conscious of its own meaning. That the great artist is not very distant from us either in space or time one is encouraged to believe when he hears a reverent man say, as I heard one recently, "I could have no *spiritual* relations with God except on terms of equality." That was not blasphemy, though it may be thought worthy of the cross, but the truer piety, such as is possible only for die echten Götterſöhne, the genuine sons of gods, or, let us say at once without Hellenism and without fear, for the sons of God.

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